

*Radical reflexivity: Assessing the value of
psycho-spiritual practices of self as a
medium for the professional development
of teachers.*

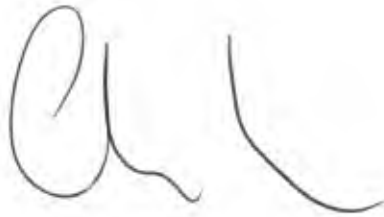
PhD Thesis by Charles Keck

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I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Charles Keck

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

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Abstract

This thesis discusses a case study of a psycho-spiritual retreat programme comprising an eclectic *bricolage* of technologies of self, ranging from the contemplative, to the artistic and the psychotherapeutic. It explores the possibility that such practices can be understood as a Foucauldian care of self, enabling teachers to participate in a *radical reflexivity* around subjectivity. It is argued that such reflexivity, whilst not directly concerned with teachers' professional identity, is transformative within their professional practice. Evidence to substantiate this hypothesis is sought in semi-structured interviews with participating Spanish and Mexican teachers. These interviews explore the teachers' understandings of their 'before', 'during' and 'after'. What had they experienced? How had it affected their understandings of themselves? How had these new understandings affected the ongoing construction of their identity as teachers?

Interview data is organized and analysed through three complementary areas of problematization; *Questions of Purpose*, *Questions of Order*, and *Questions of Performance*. Evidence in and around these fields is embedded in a debate around subjectivity, teacher identity and education informed by thinkers of *becoming* including Nietzsche, Foucault, Deleuze and Britzman. Assessment of the value of the experience is also made using the psycho-spiritual referents of the retreat programme itself, as elaborated by its founder Claudio Naranjo.

The empirical-theoretical analysis of narrative evidence poses questions about the established limits of traditional teacher development opportunities and of the 'service' oriented paradigm of professional ethics. The care of the self as a radical reflexivity, in which the teacher examines their constitution as *human beings*, might provide 'a way out' for teachers stuck uncreatively in their own historical subjectivities and the dominant educational paradigms. In such a way concrete examples of radical reflexivity in action could usefully contribute to debates occurring around alternatives in teacher identity discourse.

There is more in my life than any official definition of identity can express. I am not exhausted by my identity. I am not entirely captured by it, even though it is stamped upon me—and even though it enables me. This fugitive difference between my identity and that in me which slips through its conceptual net is to be prized; it forms a pool from which creativity can flow and attentiveness to the claims of other identities might be drawn.

W.E. Connolly, 1991, p. 120.

Introduction

This thesis is organized in five sections. Section 1, *Framing the Thesis*, describes the origins, motivation and rationale of my evolving interest in a psycho-spiritually inspired reflexivity among teachers. It sets out in broad terms what the thesis hopes to achieve and what falls outside its pretensions, as well as describing and justifying the methodology. The subsequent three sections (*Questions of Purpose*, *Questions of Order*, and *Questions of Performance*) are an extended analysis of the narratives of the twenty teachers who were interviewed as part of a qualitative case study approach to the research. Combined, these three sections form the bulk of the thesis (approximately three quarters), not least because the data analysis is undertaken in juxtaposition with what I consider to be useful and relevant theoretical or empirical positions from the literature. The thesis, therefore, does not have a 'literature' section *per se*, as is often the case; rather, relevant literature is used as a means of accessing and interpreting the data. Whilst each of the three data analysis sections contains one chapter dedicated to discussion and conclusions related to the particular question being explored, the last section of the thesis, *Situating the Research in the Field of Teacher Identity Discourse*, aims to open up the debate to a broader discussion of the findings in relation to issues of teacher identity, of education and of subjectivity in general.

The theoretical thinking brought to bear in the three data analysis sections is diverse and is not drawn fully together until this last section of the thesis. I am aware that this could present the reader with difficulties as they try to grapple with the direction of the thesis. One might say that the principle of bricolage that is present in the programme being studied is also present in the thesis itself as diverse data and theory are woven together. This lends itself to a potential richness in terms of the juxtaposition of ideas that can set the data 'to work' in differing but (I hope) complementary directions, but perhaps requires that any reader work hard in holding 'the story' together. If, in Deleuzian terms, the theoretical matrix can be represented as a multiplicity of 'lines of flight' from the data itself, there is also good reason to provide a rudimentary map of the default territory from which all these movements are occurring, and the best place for such a map would appear to be here in this introduction.

The key concepts to hold in mind whilst reading the thesis can be found within a diversity of thinkers from an eclectic array of disciplines and traditions. However, for the sake of clarity it is perhaps useful to imagine them gathered together under a loose umbrella of Foucauldian theory. The reference to a Foucauldian framework or principle can, I hope, provide the reader with an overarching comprehension as to what it is that the thesis is attempting to do. Such a gathering together under Foucault does not mean that tensions do not exist within the thesis, that the case, the data, and the theory do not appear to be pulling in separate directions on occasion, or from certain perspectives; rather, it means that preference or priority is being given to the similarities that can be found or imagined between the research's component elements (case, data, and theory) on the grounds that holding this multiplicity together lends itself to greater possibilities for the research to generate friction, heat, and 'get the data working' in the ethico-political-spiritual field that it is being situated. T

Three Foucauldian themes are of particular relevance in understanding what the thesis is 'doing': the ethics of the care of the self, thought, and the micro-physics of power. Regarding the ethics of *the care of the self*, Foucault's overtly ethical turn derives from a later shift in the focus of Foucault's concerns within the triad of power-knowledge-subjectivity. While his earlier work (for example, *The*

Archaeology of Knowledge and *Discipline and Punish*) was bleakly concerned with how the subject becomes constellated within and by power-knowledge (i.e. is produced by history), the explorations of his later writings (for example, *The History of Sexuality*), further clarified in several important interviews (see, for example the interview 1983 interview with Rabinow and Dreyfus included in *The Foucault Reader*), turn toward the subject's capacity to respond within this network of power, that is to say the subject's own productive capacity, or 'agency'. Such 'agency' is perhaps best understood as being mediated by what Foucault identifies as the technologies of self through which the subject has the sense of constituting themselves and entering into dialogue with 'structure'. These technologies of self are not opposed to the technologies of power; rather, the relations that these two technologies signify are mutually enfolded and overlapping. The technologies of self are not fields of absolute freedom; rather, they must be understood as products of their time. It is in the dialogue between the technologies of power and the technologies of self that a subject's *governmentality* comes into being, meaning the degree to which the subject is (self-)determined by dominant discourses or able to create themselves within and from critical thinking and experience.

Foucault's ethos of the care of the self recalls the fact that the subject is in permanent danger of being lost to and in history, and as such is ethically bound to pay attention to the forces at work in determining who they are and what they might become. The ethics of the care of the self, and, by association, the concept of the technologies of self, are fundamental to the thesis in as much as the programme being studied (the Seekers After Truth programme) can best be understood as an assemblage of technologies of self, and what the thesis hopes to establish is the value of this assemblage as a medium for the care of the self. One central question the thesis is asking is to what degree this programme enables its participants to re-position themselves within power relationships in such a way that they are freer of their intimate and social history, more able to participate in a creative unfolding of the human experience, or specifically in this case to the creative unfolding of the identity as teachers.

The second Foucauldian concept, or value, vital to 'the work' the thesis attempts to do is that of *thought*. This is not thought, or thinking as conventionally understood, by which the subject reflects on an object, an activity, or process and thereby constructs and orientates themselves within the world. Foucault is more interested not in what we think, but how it is that we came to think in this particular way, and what effect this type of thinking has within the subjects self-other relations. It is this perspective on thinking that Foucault refers to as *thought*. This Foucauldian thought is the means by which we stand back from ourselves so that we might perceive our thinking as an object to be interrogated. The value of such thought is, above all, that it may allow the subject to become free of themselves, free of their unexamined thinking. The importance of thought to Foucault can be understood once we recognize that the Foucauldian subject is not the rationally autonomous subject of the enlightenment and was born not into freedom but into limit, not only a biological, natural limit, but also the political, social, historical limit through which we are produced. To escape such limits, the subject must engage in the work of Foucauldian thought, they must learn how to step back from themselves and to think differently.

Foucault ascribes a high value to this thought because its necessity encapsulates the human predicament – we live and negotiate our experience on the precarious frontier between enslavement and freedom, between the past and the future. Any practice that enables the subject to escape the past and opens them up creatively to the unfolding potential of the future is politically and culturally significant, and represents the possibility of spirituality through transgression (without reference to a transcendent God or Man). Clear parallels exist with psychotherapeutic and spiritual practices that look into and beyond habits of perception and action with the intention of transcending the limits of self-other relations. Just as Foucault demonstrates a particular approach or method to this critical thought, psychotherapy and mysticism have developed other methods, but the goal is similar; the individual is invited to embrace the possibility of a subjectivity founded on an experience of event and truth that lies outside prescription or ideology. In so doing the historical subject can, as Foucault would say, become free of itself. What the research hopes to do is to document and situate the programmes

ability to generate this type of thought in the participants and to catalyze a professional thinking (and acting) that is recognizably different.

Central to the research, then, is the evidence that this thought has been catalysed in individual participants. Moreover, the juxtaposition of this evidence with a diverse array of theory, attempts to locate these examples of a shifting thoughtscape within broader arguments about subjectivity and to establish their possible ethical, political and spiritual importance. More specifically, the organization of the data analysis sections reflects recurring themes in the narrative alongside a 'before' and 'after' temporality, both of which indicate that I am not interested in thought 'for the sake of it'; rather, value corresponds to thought that is helping participating teachers to address the difficulties or consolidate the strengths and opportunities they encounter in the nitty-gritty of their professional lives.

This brings us to the third concept which is paramount in Foucault's intellectual project: the *microphysics of power*. Foucault's understanding of power as not situated in any specific location, but rather as extending out (and created within) a matrix of relations, processes, and practices, means that Foucault's interest lies in how the subject is bound by and replicates or produces power relations at the local level. For Foucault power finds its expression and is formulated in the 'small print' of our social relations. If we want to understand power and see how it works it is this 'small print' that we need to study. Foucault's interest in how power is constellated collectively within society led him firstly to examine the organization of truth and procedures of discipline - the technologies of power - that permitted the administration of human life and the operation of institutions that were able to create and police a describable population from what had once been the indiscernible mass of the common people. This is the power that exposed the subject and the minutiae of their actions, thoughts and desires, to the objectifying gaze of the state and the professional disciplines. It is here, within this *microphysics of power* that the subject must discern the nature of their bondage and practice their freedom through transgression. Foucault was not a utopian, and did not believe that power could ever be fully disarmed. The subject could never exist transparently and outside relations of power, and the work of freedom acquired

significance not in the great political and ideological struggles of history, but to the degree that the individual was able to embody them in their day to day life. To some degree Foucault's later focus on the technologies of self, and the ethics of the care of the self, reflect this interest in the micro-physics of power. The question Foucault addresses when reflecting on the ethical dimension of these technologies is not how the subject can escape power, but how can the subject prepare themselves to take up their position inside the relations of power with as little harm as possible to themselves or to others.

This ethical perspective on power-knowledge-subjectivity, the way in which Foucault, ultimately, brings our 'destiny' back to a question of individual responsibility (and therefore embeds the individual subject and their desire at the heart of the social and political matrix) has profound implications for the way we might choose to approach the work of politics and/or resistance. This Foucauldian take on power, politics and structure-agency therefore provides an important backdrop to the methodology of the research, and to its evaluative criteria. It makes the focus on the immediate lives of the teachers highly relevant, and, more importantly, it makes the insistence on concrete practices totally necessary. Nothing meaningful can be said to occur if it has not descended to, or is building up from, the micro-physics of these teachers' existence within the games of power of teaching. Such games of power are at once personal (idiosyncratic) and institutional (role playing), but whatever their grounding they must be embodied in specific practices. And conversely, in a reverse of the same logic, evidence of local change within the teachers' narratives can be read as politically significant.

Taken as a whole, the juxtaposition of these three complementary concepts – the care of the self, thought, and the micro-physics of power - constitute, or give rise to the meta-concept of the *politics of ourselves*. If there is one Foucauldian term that can be said to encapsulate the *raison d'être* of the research, it is this. The term itself points to the meeting of the psychological and spiritual with the ethical and political. This is the psycho-social territory that the research hopes to occupy both because of the nature of the case in question (i.e. the psycho-spiritual programme whose value is being determined by the research), and the way in which the highly personalized narrative evidence (those stories of 'ourselves') is embedded in a

cross-disciplinary theoretical bricolage. The function of these juxtapositions is to dissolve some of the tensions of apparent opposites, for example between the personal and the political, and to witness how the multiplicity of the 'event' of teaching and learning can be made accessed by reference to the concrete example of specific narratives. Hopefully, it will become clear during the reading of the sections dedicated to data analysis that the intensely psycho-spiritual work produces effects which are patently political. In demonstrating this link, the research is arguing for a new site of development, resistance and transgression in the professional lives of teachers. This site might best be described as the teachers 'soul'. Though the 'soulful' accounts in the teachers narratives are not spoken from any orchestrated political agenda, and are not representative of the voice of an articulated movement, they are evidence of 'souls in transgression', of people finding the desire, the motivation to work in the cracks that appear in their identities and in the education system, opening up spaces to develop new identities and new self-other relations within the highly policed environment of schooling.

If I have succeeded in presenting a synthesis of the argument through which the theoretical framework drives, sustains, and projects the work of the thesis, this simplified impression needs to be qualified. To start with, Foucault himself would have distrusted the 'neatness' of this synthesis, and seen his role as interrogator of the smooth surface of appearance. Moreover, the thesis contains important tensions that it does not necessarily resolve. I would like to feel that these unresolved tensions correspond to what Foucault describes as the "permanent provocation[s]" (Foucault, 2000d, p.342) of power-knowledge-subjectivity. The provocations between contrasting truths, discourses, and experiences are permanent because they cannot be definitively resolved in one direction or another, and are obliged to co-exist in continual flux. It is the irresolvability that we can find at the heart of non-dualism, both the Foucauldian non-dualism of modernity, and the ancient non-dualism of mystical/spiritual teachings. Shunryu Suzuki, writing in *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind* (2006), refers to the condition, the event, of "not two, and not one". He illustrates the non-dualistic attitude and

potential with reference to the mind-body 'split' so characteristic of Western culture:

If you think your body and mind are two, that is wrong; if you think that they are one, that is also wrong. Our body and our mind are both two *and* one ... in actual experience, our life is not only plural, but also singular. Each one of us is both dependent and independent. (p.7).

One parallel with this 'yes *and* no' position in the thesis is my attempt to use Foucault to address a practice (the Seekers After Truth programme) which contains many elements that at first appearances appear to be conspicuously unFoucauldian. How can this 'work'? Most notably, the enneagram of personality, a diagnostic tool at the theoretical and experiential centre of the programme, appears to be all the things that Foucault problematized; it presents what appears to be a universal, prescriptive, deterministic theory of personality and asks the subject to accept a particular description of themselves and to (self-)categorize or (self-)diagnose. The enneagram of personality would appear to 'imprison' the subject in a discourse not dissimilar to the individualizing and totalizing discourses and practice of the human sciences and of government. But, by recourse to the principle of non-dualism, I would argue that when used 'correctly' the enneagram of personality is a map of the human condition that simultaneously affirms the imprisonment of the subject *and* incites the subject to freedom. This is very much in keeping with Foucault's method, often criticized for abandoning the subject to the prison of history and the effects of power-knowledge in works such as *The Archaeology of Knowledge* or *Discipline and Punish*. Contrary to his critics conclusion, Foucault's point is not to definitively condemn the subject to unending tutelage; rather, his interest is in delineating the forces at work in tying the subject to their "own identity in a constraining way" (2002d, p.330) as a of inciting the subject to take responsibility for their freedom. He reminds the subject that they are in constant danger, that they are suspended in a spider's web of power-knowledge in which the 'myth' of rational autonomy is one more thread of possible entrapment.

It is here that important connections can be made with the work of the Seekers After Truth (SAT) programme whose function is to reveal to the subject the limitations of their default subjectivity, the poverty of their awareness of self and

other; not so that they might remain in this diminished state, but so that they might take seriously the dangers associated with such diminishment and be spurred into the action which comprises the care of the self. If Foucault reveals to us how we have been culturally, politically and socially enthralled to the discourses of history, Claudio Naranjo's SAT programme is working in the same direction but by different means and in close-up. Whilst Foucault throws in our face the discourses of history, our collective, cultural constitutions, Naranjo's object is to throw in our face the discourses of the individual, the particular philosophy, world view, and set of practices that the individual has adopted as a means to negotiate the emotional landscape of power-knowledge-subjectivity. Furthermore, *personality as defined by the enneagram can be conflated with discourse*; it is a means by which we understand the world and enter into relation with it in a way that is recognizable, a constellation of traits (practices) rooted in an emotional and cognitive core. Where Foucault has focused on our social systems and institutions, the Seekers After Truth programme focuses on the immediacy of the individual's interactions and their survival strategies within the threat of power-knowledge. To return to the metaphor of the spider's web, we might say that Foucault has mapped out the broad strokes of the web, whilst the enneagram is mapping out the way in which the individual attempts to survive the 'trauma' of power-knowledge as it plays through the self-other relations that this web conditions.

That the individual should attempt to negotiate their survival or flourishing within the relations of power-knowledge does not seem to be a contentious idea. What is perhaps 'traumatic' to the post-modern critical sensibility is the fact that the enneagram of personality identifies and describes a set of *nine* basic strategies which any individual might use. Even if significant nuances exist within each of the nine strategies, the idea that each person conforms to one or other of these basic strategies is cause for much alarm to the thinkers of modernity. Human diversity and idiosyncrasy should not and could not be reduced in this way. We might suppose that Foucault would be horrified. However, an automatic reaction of supposedly Foucauldian horror perhaps misses the point. Foucault critique does take aim at power-knowledge, however, he is never claiming that it is not possible

to organize and describe the world, or to experience and speak truths. What he is concerned to draw our attention to is that all this activity of the production of knowledge and truth does not take place outside power. The question to ask is not, can humans be described, could their individuality be mapped and commonalities be identified; rather, the question is what is the effect of any particular map or way of mapping, how is it inserted into power-knowledge-subjectivity, does it augment the degree to which the subject becomes constrained, or does it incite us to a practice of freedom?

We should avoid the black-and-white rendering of Foucauldian thought which would lead almost automatically to the conclusion that Foucault would be against any attempt to describe the subject. Foucault is not saying that nothing can be said about the individual, or about our collective identity, about humanity; rather, he would seem to be against what he calls the “government of individualization” (2002d, p.330), which is non-other than the symbiosis of knowledge and institution through which the state (benevolently?) administers our lives. In this format, the individual is described so that they may be subjected to power, and become its object. But surely the Foucault who embraced, at least temporarily, the Iranian Islamic revolution as an example of an uprising against the status quo, would not dismiss the enneagram of personality because it appears prescriptive and universalizing, without wanting first and foremost to see what it does. We might assume that Foucault would be curious to look beyond the content of the Seekers After Truth programme to try to understand its effect, and to locate this effect on the continuum between freedom and constraint.

So regardless of the specifics of its content, Foucault would have wanted to consider first and foremost if any such experience could be regarded as oppositional? In his essay *The Subject and Power* (2002d) Foucault identifies a profile of modern struggles that oppose power in its prevailing manifestations. Whilst all of the six commonalities he identifies are of interest to this thesis, the last three are of particular interest and worth citing in full. Today’s struggles can be considered ‘modern’ when:

4. They are struggles that question the status of the individual. On the one hand, they assert the right to be different and underline everything

that makes individuals truly individual. On the other hand, they attack everything that separates the individual, breaks his [sic] links with others, splits up community life, forces the individual back on himself, and ties him to his own identity in a constraining way.

These struggles are not exactly for or against the “individual”; rather, they are struggles against the “government of individualization”.

5. They are an opposition to the effects of power linked with knowledge, competence, and qualification – struggles against the privileges of knowledge. But they are also an opposition against secrecy, deformation, and mystifying representations imposed on people.

There is nothing “scientistic” in this (that is, a dogmatic belief in the value of scientific knowledge), but neither is it a sceptical or relativistic refusal of all verified truth. What is questioned is the way knowledge circulates and functions, its relations to power. In short, the regime of knowledge [savior].

6. Finally, all these present struggles revolve around the question: Who are we? They are a refusal of these abstractions, of economic and ideological state violence, which ignore who we are individually, and also a refusal of a scientific or administrative inquisition that determines who one is. (ibid. pp.330-331)

There is much within the SAT programme to suggest that it is, broadly speaking, compatible with Foucault’s definition of a modern opposition to power. For this reason, I feel it is safe to assume that Foucault, at the very least, would have been curious about the programme and its effects. It is unlikely that he would locate in the SAT programme the scientific and administrative excesses of the regime of knowledge prevalent in schooling. Should he have chosen, also, to locate the enneagram of personality in the ethical/spiritual tradition rather than the scientific field (even though it generates personality categories or types), it is not unreasonable to assume that Foucault would have seen the SAT as a manifestation of a regime of knowledge distinct to the scientific-administrative regime currently ascendant. As such, it sets itself in opposition to the dominant regime of knowledge and its particular way of determining who one is. If it is a discourse, then it is a discourse that punctures the smooth surfaces of the scientific-administrative discourse of modernity and invites the participant to enter into a struggle for a new subjectivity. Though tensions do exist between the Foucauldian theoretical framework used to analyze the data and determine value, and Naranjo’s theoretical and empirical scaffolding that runs through the case being evaluated,

the possibility of opposition and struggle within these two fields ensures that there is a commonality sufficient to justify an insistence on a dialogue between the two.

By way of an ending to this brief introduction I would like to take the opportunity to express my gratitude to a variety of people whose existence or input or material support created the conditions in which the thesis could come about: Gerardo Ortiz, who introduced me to the world of psychotherapy and who subsequently became my mentor and colleague; Angélica Schenerock, who has accompanied my doctoral suffering from afar, with love and in faith; my mother, Ann Clarke, who was a teacher herself, and whose hunger for life and experience never ceases to surprise and inspire, and whose material and moral support have been invaluable; to Grazia Cecchini, for her commitment to the vicissitudes of a life and politics of head and heart, and her encouragement to finish my thesis and move on; to Alex Moore, my supervisor, for his great patience and skilful stewardship of my journey through the labyrinth of a doctorate, and for allowing me to discover for myself the importance of the relationship between my research and his own; to Tim Trench, for teaching me about friendship, and for his invaluable help in editing the first draft; to all the teachers who took part in the interviews, generously offering me their time, their trust and their candour; to the doctoral students of research room 576, for their companionship in accepting me as an 'honorary', fringe member; to the Council for Science and Technology of Mexico who provided me with the grant that made my doctoral studies possible. Lastly, I would like to dedicate the thesis to Dr. Claudio Naranjo whose work as a psycho-spiritual teacher and advocate of socio-political reform provided me with the experiences necessary to discover in myself a commitment to an idea and to a cause, and the drive necessary to return to university and the disciplines and wanderings of a doctorate.

Section 1:

Framing the Thesis

This section comprises three chapters, each of which provides an important backdrop to the thesis. Chapter 1, *The Story Behind the Story*, is a brief autobiographic description of the route by which I came across my research subject, providing a glimpse of the origins of my 'desire' as a researcher. Chapter 2, *Getting Behind the Title*, provides an overview of the thesis' underlying rationale and its evolution by examining the thesis' title and explaining how it evolved over time, as well as the significance of some of its terms. Especially important in this chapter is a very synthetic description of the psycho-spiritual programme that is the object of the case study. Chapter 3, *A Methodology*, provides the core argument in support of the way in which the research was conducted as a qualitative case study whose evidence base was comprised exclusively of in-depth semi-structured interviews or intentioned conversations.

Chapter 1: The Story Behind the Story

School Trouble

The research presented in this thesis arises from convictions rooted in experiences generated in both my professional and personal life whilst living and working in Mexico over a period of fifteen years. In particular, my ten years as the director of a small and continually evolving development project to promote educational reform in Mexico gave me the opportunity to participate in regional and national debates regarding such reforms and to register the resistance to change in schools. Needless to say, the project's efforts to penetrate the 'system', and to catalyse meaningful shifts in educational vision and practice, proved largely impotent in the face of the prevailing school culture in Mexico, despite resonating with some individual teachers. In part, this may be explained by the team's inexperience, the fact that we were learning on the job, but there can be no doubt that the challenges to 'getting it right' were enormous, and the growing sensation was one of battling with the multi-headed Hydra, two heads springing up where one had been severed.

With certain particularities the sources of resistance to change in the education system in Mexico are universally familiar, and can be broadly defined as: political, structural and professional. However, as the years went by I came to suspect the presence of another source of resistance, of a more personal and intimate nature. I came to sense that, paradoxically, these teachers did not actually *believe* in education in its most profound and radical sense, as might be understood from its Latin root *educare*, to 'bring out', or from its association with a process of transformation, a personal and social alchemy by which human potential is refined, or refines itself. I am now able to place my dimly perceived conceptions within a broader framework for the resistance to learning, such as that offered by the psychoanalytic thinking of Wilfred Bion. According to Bion (1961), our cultural idealization of education, collective and individual, masks a lack of faith in knowledge, and defends us from the anxiety of the experience of uncertainty and ambiguity. Deborah Britzman, also writing from a psychoanalytic perspective,

emphasizes that for Bion true thinking must embrace vulnerability and uncertainty, and thereby involves the thinker in a “journey of emotional significance” (Britzman, 2003, p.100).

Perhaps, then, Mexican teachers were still unable to claim thinking as their adventure of emotional significance, and to incorporate uncertainty and vulnerability in their practice as educators. Furthermore, these same teachers, it seemed to me, could not testify to the possibility of the ‘lived’ experience of transformation through education. This inexperience becomes what might be best described as a lack of faith, not only in the officially sanctioned site of education, the school, but more importantly a lack of faith in freedom, human potential and the human experience. There is, as it were, nowhere to go, there is only what there is. As well as being embroiled, consciously or unconsciously, with the standard obstacles to becoming agents of change, the impotence of these teachers also derived – in my view - from a fundamental lack of belief whose nature might best be described as ‘spiritual’.

Slowly, my attention turned away from the techno-rational concerns of pedagogy and didactics toward a concern for the inner world and personal experience of the teacher. I began to recognise the invisibility of teachers within a huge bureaucratic and highly politicized machine. They were caught between an array of competing and often opposing forces: the policy and bureaucracy of government, the politics and power structure of their hugely influential union, the aspirations and resistance of students, the apathy and passion of parents, and the questioning gaze of the wider community. I had, finally, fully grasped the oppressive ‘possibilities’ of the space teachers are asked to occupy and to share, and in which they must exemplify and multiply the principles and practices of the liberal, democratic ideal. I had begun to ask Willard Waller’s question: “What does teaching do to teachers?” (quoted in Britzman, 2003, p.84).

Life Trouble

“What if the dream of learning is other to the structures of education?” (Britzman, 2003, p.53). The question posed by Britzman in *After-Education* is poignant and provocative. Speaking from my own life experience it seems now that ‘dreamed-of

learning' began on leaving formal education and entering the 'real' world. In retrospect, dreamed of learning would be none other than knowing how to be in that 'real' world, how to occupy a space and the relationships within it, how to be comfortable in life, comfortable in myself, creative, useful and of service. This learning has been slow and spiralling: an unfolding that folds over itself and disappears to appear again elsewhere. It is a learning that has required facing the unspeakable fears that haunted my own school life, only to find them as much present in the here and now as ghosts of the past:

The terror and constraint of education come from within, even as these impositions are found outside. If psychical development is the least pedagogical experience because it is so subject to the helplessness of our beginnings, to the passion for ignorance, in short, to the unconscious and the return of this repressed, then these modes of resistance offer us another sense of the difficulties of that other development, namely education. (Britzman, 2003, p.21)

I was not only the subject of circumstance, at a particular nexus of history; I was also a prisoner of myself, unable to cease to be what I was, unable to unlearn myself, to learn otherness. If I had believed I could *think* my way out of myself, I was to discover that those same 'thoughts' were the very material of that self. This realization finds an echo in Michel Foucault's double-helix of subjectification:

There are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to. (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p.21)

Personal revelation, when it finally occurred, came in the form of exhaustion and surrender; the exhaustion of my own thought process and the surrender of my illusion of autonomy. It could not be done alone, from myself, by myself, with my own meagre tools. The eye could not *see* itself, nor the hand lead itself, nor thought *unthink* itself. In other words, I learnt, slowly, painfully, that my dream of learning could not be dreamt in isolation, that its humanity required a humanity larger than my own, that its problem was not *my* problem, its knowledge not *my* knowledge. Help came finally in the form of Gestalt group therapy. Meeting once a week over a period of two years, our human ensemble swam and floated through the murky waters of *me-ness*, *you-ness*, *together-ness*, and *apart-ness*, tolerant and intolerant of knowledge and communication, both certain and uncertain that something was

happening to us, akin, perhaps, to Britzman's description of the journey of a group brought together under the elusive intentionality of growth by fire:

To tolerate development, the group must learn from its own uncertain experiences of development and from the intelligence of fragility. Recognizing fragility is made through language itself, where relations between perceptions and reality testing are worked through. It is also made from yet another source: the fragility of distinction. Becoming distinct requires the recognition of the other's distinctiveness, and this learning reconfigures the group's worries over the loss of individual distinction and love into the idea of what allows distinction its possibility is the vulnerability of each individual. (Britzman, 2003, p.120)

And so, with just such a recognition of individual distinctness and common vulnerability, I began a journey that attempted transformation through self-knowledge. Ten years on it feels too early to know where this journey might end. Has change occurred? I think so, it feels so. If I were to summarize that change up until now, it would be, ironically, that I have become 'other' by becoming more 'me'. This circularity echoes Jacques Lacan's definition of the end of the psychoanalytic process as "identification with the symptom. The analysis achieves its end when the patient is able to recognize, in the Real of his symptom, the only support of his being" (Žižek, 2008, p.81).

One blessing among many on this journey was my fortuitous inscription in a programme to promote human growth known as "Seekers After Truth" (SAT), devised by the psychotherapist and spiritual teacher, Claudio Naranjo. This eclectic formula for promoting self-knowledge, experience and transformation has been distilled by Naranjo from spiritual and psychotherapeutic traditions of seeking and journeying. Naranjo, with good reason, describes its programme as an "ego-grinding machine" (ego referring here to the idea of the 'false-self', or 'false-consciousness'). It is, by design, teaching and learning in the raw, knowledge of *unknowledge* in the flesh, 'self' in the mirror of 'other', 'no-self' in the heart of 'no-other'. If this sounds scary, it is because, as the necessity of the unconscious would indicate, knowledge itself is scary, and the 'false-self' to be 'ground', that edifice whose foundations are sustained within the unconscious, is the alchemic transposition of our deeper, inadmissible fears, anxieties and desires.

Naranjo's interest in promoting the SAT programme with teachers as a means of challenging the "terror and constraint" (Britzman, 2003, p.21) institutionalized in schools, and his commitment to changing the world through changing education, coincided with my own perceptions of the psychic resistance to learning of teachers in Mexico, and the need to 'take on' teacher identity from a less technical angle. The SAT programme was duly offered to teachers and social workers in Chiapas, Mexico, from 2004 onwards. This thesis is an extension of this work, and was conceived originally as an evaluation of the impact of the SAT experience in the personal-professional lives of teachers. Stories of transformation in teaching - if, how, why, and when they were occurring - needed to be recovered as meta-narrative. And this meta-narrative needed to be 'out there', participating in the debate around teacher identity, and directed as protest and affirmation at the heart of education. And so, with this conviction, I decided to get out of the 'fire' and return to the 'frying pan', go back to school, this time as a doctoral student.

Research Trouble

It was early on in my research reading that I was introduced to Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*. What had been dimly felt about my own schooling, about schools, about teachers, came alive in Foucault's critique and was projected across not just *my* history but *our* history. Frank Pignatelli summarizes the full implications of Foucault's thought for schools:

Trenchantly, Foucault described the school as a "block of capacity-communication-power." The school is a disciplinary site, a locus of power/knowledge in a positive, constitutive sense. Schools can be dangerous places, not because of the presence of coarse, brutal, and illicit forms of power, but because disciplinary instrumentalities, ostensibly benevolent, efficient, and in pursuit of the truth about teachers, their practice, and their students, extend the self-limiting rule of normality and the marginalization-rehabilitation of the deviant. (1993, p.420)

My research world had suddenly expanded. What had been localized to education, teacher well-being and psychotherapy, embedded itself in the Foucauldian trinity of power-knowledge-subjectivity. From the initial shock of recognition, my journey within and under the gaze of Foucault has been a long one. Relatively early on I passed through some of his discussions on ethics and was struck by his notion of

the care of the self. I felt that this, somehow, held the key as to *why* such psycho-spiritual work with teachers was important, how Naranjo's esoteric and psychological aims and practices could be localized in the wider contemporary philosophical and political debate.

Initially, there appeared to be contradictions raised by Foucault's critique of the human sciences. Is psychotherapy itself just another trap, another discourse of power-knowledge, sold to us, acquired by us, in our compulsion to 'truth'? Two texts spurred me to pursue the 'Foucault connection', to carry on drawing the edges of the understanding of my research in co-relation to my evolving understanding of Foucault. James Miller's semi-biographical *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (1993) brought me closer to the man behind the thought, the philosophical and life sources of that thought. From the perspective of my research, one idea stood out, that Foucault, the modern sceptic questioning positivist claims to truth, returns us to experience, to truth as event, and returns experience to the unruly mysteries of the *bios philosophicus*. There were echoes here of Dionysius and therefore of psychotherapy.

Subsequently, James Bernauer's *The Final Foucault*, with its exploration of Foucault's "ecstatic thinking", further confirmed the idea that the deconstruction and de-centring of positivism's Absolute Man was not 'defeatist', but invited us to re-think ourselves in recognition of our transformative potential:

Embracing an ecstatic experiment beyond Kant, [Foucault's] last writings declare the need to escape our inherited relation to the self, a declaration which complements and intensifies his earlier announcement of the "death of man." "What can be the ethic of an intellectual – I accept the title of intellectual which seems at present to nauseate some people – if not that: to render oneself permanently capable of getting free of oneself". (1994, p.68)

Within Foucault's scepticism another meta-project emerges – freedom, understood as the ability to become free of one's self. As I laboured uneasily forward with nagging doubts about the paradoxes within Foucault's thought, encouraged on the one hand by Foucault's possibly 'mystic' asceticism, and discouraged by his scepticism of human sciences and critique of Freud, the full, liberating, weight of that scepticism combined with his ethical turn and "cry for freedom" (Marshall,

1996, p.43) began to dawn on me. By reducing all truth claims to discourse, Foucault returns power-knowledge-subjectivity to ethics. Truth in this trinity becomes secondary to *effect*; and effect, in turn, is to be judged according to Foucault's ethical value of due diligence; and diligence, his *critical attitude to the present* (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, pp.39-42), in turn, to be exercised in the name of freedom, transgression, solidarity, creativity, experience, and the unruly body. Could Foucault's "politics of ourselves" (Foucault, 1980) be argued and located here? And in the same way that Bernauer argues for a negative theology, would it be possible to comprehend a negative psychology operating at the borders of the human sciences, perhaps not concerned to discover origins but to help us master or get free of ourselves? Could such a mystic or ascetic psychology, perhaps closer to ethics than to science, provide some kind of antidote or source of resistance to the "antiquated humanism and insipid psychology" Foucault identifies at the heart of our "barbarous culture" and its monolithic education (Foucault, quoted in Miller, 1993, p.172). Such a negative psychology would be concerned not to tie us to 'truths' about ourselves but to use its reflexivity, its practices and interpretations, to set in motion processes of transformation by which we become untied from our own identity and set loose from historical contingency, pushing us instead into an uncertain present time and a future potentially outside our immediate conception. Such a negative psychology would be at the service of a spirit of modernity, epitomized for Foucault by the champion of *dandyism*, Baudelaire:

Modern man [sic], for Baudelaire, is not the man who goes off to discover himself, his secrets, and his hidden truth; he is the man who tries to invent himself. This modernity does not "liberate man in his own being"; it compels him to face the task of producing himself. (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p.42)

Coming to some kind of fragile truce with Foucault enabled me to begin to explore beyond the specific domain of his thinking. Notably, I returned to Alex Moore's incisive discussion on teacher identity and on reflexivity, *The Good Teacher* (2004), and to Britzman's psychoanalytically informed discussions of education and teacher identity in *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects* (1998). I have also, as will become evident, extrapolated from Foucault to Gilles Deleuze, and from Deleuze to John Dewey, via the notion of "transcendental empiricism" which unites their

thinking according to Inna Semetsky (2006, p.25). Lastly, I 'discovered' Slavoj Žižek's Lacanian-Communist discussions of our present socio-political predicament, *Living in the End Times* (2011) and his previous psycho-social discussion of ideology, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989/2008). Needless to say, although I was concerned not to avoid making the research overly self-referential, the thinking, practice and writing of Claudio Naranjo provided a continuous backdrop for the research in juxtaposition with these other theorists.

Chapter 2: Getting Behind the Title

Unsurprisingly, the title of the thesis has undergone changes: the original working title, *Humanising education for the 21st century: an evaluation of therapeutic tools in the professional development of school teachers in Mexico and Spain*, evolved, post upgrade and with much soul searching, into *Radical Reflexivity? Using Foucault to assess the value of psycho-spiritual practices as a 'training' for teachers*. This title was functional until a crisis of re-organization in the last throes of writing up, which resulted in the falling from prominence of Foucault, and the birth of the title, *Radical reflexivity? Assessing the value of psycho-spiritual practices of self as a medium for the professional development of teachers*. In a final twist, and at the suggestion of Professor Paul Standish, who kindly served as internal reader, the qualification of 'Radical reflexivity' with a question mark was dropped, thus reducing the emphasis on a problematization of this concept, leaving it instead to stand in affirmation as a statement of possibility. The evolution of the title to its final version (*Radical reflexivity: Assessing the value of psycho-spiritual practices of self as a medium for the professional development of teachers*) represents the synthesis of many substantial progressions in my understanding of the 'problem' of the research, and of what the research could effectively 'do'. Of most significance, perhaps, was the 'discovery' of the term *radical reflexivity* as a means to both situate the 'case' within the recognizable discourse of reflexivity, and to differentiate it from mainstream practices of reflexivity within teacher education on the grounds of its unusually extreme or *radical* commitment to self-knowledge.

Unpacking 'radical reflexivity'

As a further development from the *modus operandi* proposed by advocates of *reflective* practice in teaching, *reflexivity* moves the spotlight of critical thought toward the historically positioned subject, thereby locating reflection within wider personal, social and cultural contexts (Moore, 2004, pp.147-150). Moore, in *The Good Teacher*, and as a conclusion drawn from his participation in his *Reflective Practice Project*, goes so far as to conclude that reflexivity "offers practitioners the

best hope ... of long-term professional happiness and improvement of classroom practice" (ibid. p.141). If reflectivity can be regarded as encouraging and facilitating teachers to critically address the why, what, when, where and how of teaching, reflexivity incorporates and emphasises the *who* of teaching. Whilst reflectivity seeks to go beyond a mechanistic use of strategies and places maximum value on a teacher's capacity to think and operate strategically, reflexivity goes beyond such strategic thinking to establish critical thinking around teacher identity, both personal and professional. Whilst reflective practice attempts to situate agency within structure, creative and strategic efficiency within institutional goals, reflexive practice situates structure within agency, the obligations of history and contingency within professional freedom. Within reflexive practice another question begins to take shape: no longer What is to be *done* to be a good teacher; rather, *Who are we* as teachers? What ought *I* to do as a teacher?

Significant parallels exist in the three formulations of reflexivity that present themselves in three apparently distant fields of thought and practice the thesis draws from – teacher training, psycho-spiritual 'seeking', and the Foucauldian critique of the subject. Whilst these three reflexivities arise within different contexts, it would appear that their central technology and *telos* overlap. In all three contexts it is the gaze that turns upon itself, the subject that becomes its own subject-object, the rationally autonomous individual that enters the labyrinth of our historical condition(ing), confronting the appearance of things in the attempt to transform or transgress that same condition(ing) and to create a subjective and experienced truth that serves as a basis from which to act.

It is these same parallels that point to the possibility of a *radical* reflexivity in the context of this case study. Firstly, 'radical' in the sense of *extreme*. Extreme in as much as the SAT programme immerses teachers in a reflexive practice that *goes beyond the practices normally available to teachers*, and also in the sense that the reflexivity of the SAT programme does not address itself to teaching; rather, its gaze falls upon the person/teacher as a *human being*, on their *humanity*. Far from aligning teachers within a concept of 'good' or 'necessary' practice, it bears more in common with the 'transgressive' ethos of the *limit-attitude* proposed by Foucault

in *What is Enlightenment?* According to Foucault, the critical, transgressive practice of reflexivity:

[...] will separate out, from the contingency that has made us what we are, the possibility of no longer being, doing, or thinking what we are, do, or think ... it is seeking to give new impetus, as far and wide as possible to the undefined work of freedom. (Foucault, 1994, pp.315-316)

This leads to a second reading of 'radical' that sits alongside 'extreme'; *radical in the sense of offering an alternative or resistance to the dominant discourses* that attempt to determine in absolute terms what is viable and desirable practice in teaching and teacher training. By virtue of their truth claims, dominant discourses of education are not only sites of production, but also sites of exclusion, requiring for their existence the marginalization of competing claims to truth. Thus, a practice of reflexivity among teachers that can be said to exceed the parameters established and maintained within a territory 'policed' by the state and its institutions – schools, universities, officially sanctioned centres for teachers - can be regarded as a potential site of resistance and insurgence, as potentially radical to the degree that this experience generates an alternative and persuasive truth on which teachers might base thought, action and feeling.

Finally, moving beyond the immediate realms of teaching, this reflexivity is 'radical' in that Foucault's ethical thinking around the care of self allows one to embed the reflexive practices of spiritual traditions and the psy-sciences (Rose, 1999) within the framework of a (radical?) "politics of ourselves" (op.cit.) or of "politics as an ethics" (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p.375). By taking up the ascetic challenge of self-transformation, albeit through the technologies currently and historically available to us, the subject participating in a particular psycho-spiritual programme can be regarded as entering into an ascetic paradigm that offers the possibility of transgression within Foucault's triad of power-knowledge-subject. Within Foucauldian ethics, ascetic work done on the self offers the opportunity to create a new perspective from which to survey the productive formulations of modernity's dominant discourses of power-knowledge. Such work, in the Foucauldian universe, or multi-verse, takes shape on the overlaps between the personal and the political, the intimate and the collective, the ethical and social.

For Foucault, the problem of the subject is a problem of truth, of the separation of true and false, and how this separation both creates us and limits us. If we are compulsive creators of forms, forms that involve new permutations for the separation of true and false, the tragedy of history is the permanent danger of becoming trapped within those same forms. Our greatest danger, then, is that we build our own prisons, and it is upon the shifting walls of this permanently evolving prison that we must project our struggle for freedom (Foucault, 2000).

By examining the narratives of participating teachers for evidence of a transformation in the way they occupy the politicized identity of 'teacher', the research will flesh out Foucault's argument for the care of self as a practice of "political spirituality". How does a particular type of care of the self play out in the institutional arena of a school (a privileged site of power-knowledge)? Does their contingent identity as teachers fragment under the gaze of self-examination, and, if so, does it subsequently coalesce at some other gravitational centre? Could we conceive of a training scheme for teachers that makes no reference to teaching, but focuses rather on their collective and individual humanity? Do we indeed see, as Foucault might have hoped or expected, that the care of self as exemplified by a particular psycho-spiritual practice leads people to "acquire the rules of law, the management techniques, and also the morality, the ethos, the practice of the self, that will allow us to play these games of power with as little domination as possible" (Foucault, 2000a, p.298)?

Unpacking 'value'

The title of this thesis claims that the research will assess the 'value' of a certain psycho-spiritual training for teachers. However, it is not my purpose here to defend or argue for the truth claims of this particular psycho-spiritual programme. The value being explored does not derive from the programme's truth claims. If the debate around truth claims is avoided, this, in part, is because to argue for and against its psychological and spiritual foundations is a thesis in itself and would preclude the possibility of examining the data from the narratives. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the Foucauldian theoretical framework, in which true and false in the human sciences cease to be absolutes, allows the researcher to

leap-frog ‘truth’ and to focus on the *effects* of any particular discourse. Thus, the thesis does not include a detailed description of the theoretical groundings, both psychological and spiritual, that underpin the curriculum of the SAT programme; rather, the description of the ‘training’ programme, presents the contents of the technologies of the self to which the teachers were exposed only in the broadest of terms. Nor is it assumed that the teachers involved in the study are ascribing absolute truth-value to their associated experiences. The focus of attention is on the significance of the exposure to and experience of these technologies of self as they manifest themselves within the diverse and divergent discourses that are present within their professional and personal lives. Thus, it is not the issue of truth that is of concern, but the ‘practical’ implications of a perspective that is intentionally radical within the context of teacher training.

Obviously, something must also be said regarding ‘value’ in relation to the subjects of the study (teachers drawn from Spain and Mexico). Although this group of subjects would permit a comparative study between Mexican and Spanish teachers, value is assessed in local terms, that is, the value that might be evidenced within the *specific experience* of each teacher included in the sample. Although this specific experience is conditioned by the institutional, political and cultural generalities of Spain or Mexico, I usually avoid drawing conclusions with reference to ‘Mexican’ or ‘Spanish’ realities, though some references to context are inevitable; rather, the focus is on value as it relates to the subjects’ ability to transform *themselves*, to engage in the “undefined work of freedom” (op.cit.) within the limitations and possibilities of their specific contexts, whatever they might be.

Unpacking ‘psycho-spiritual’

If the term psycho-spiritual implies two distinct fields within its composite, these can be differentiated in the following way. ‘Psycho’, derived from the psychological sciences, refers to what Foucault characterized as the “science of the individual” (Foucault, 2000b, p.251), that is to say, the attempt to explain the forces at work in the way an individual comes to be themselves. ‘Spiritual’, on the other hand, is taken to refer to the beliefs and practices that work upon that same individual with

the aim of addressing a given condition within a commitment to the notions of transformation, growth, development, betterment and transcendence¹. Such a definition of psycho-spiritual encompasses a great diversity of discourses and practices, from the 'scientific' to the therapeutic and the mystic.

It can therefore be used to describe the field of attention of the 'training' programme "Seekers After Truth" (known by its acronym, SAT), which is the case study of this research. This 'training' programme was originally developed in the 1970s by Claudio Naranjo, a Chilean medic who had subsequently crossed over into psychiatric research and then on to an interest in esoteric and psycho-spiritual traditions. As an active "seeker" of knowledge relating to the condition of the self, Naranjo came into contact with a diversity of influences from Gestalt therapy, to the anagram of personality (a diagnostic map of human error and virtue said to originate in the Christian esoteric or Sufi mystic tradition), to Buddhist philosophy and practice. Whilst his original development of the SAT programme in the 1970s was somewhat improvised it was, he comments, underscored by a deep structure that took its inspiration from his eclectic studies and practices:

I knew that I would want to bring together spirituality and psychotherapy; and I also intended to include the body, and also a theoretical panorama—along with meditation and work on the affective domain. In this, I was expecting from the outset to follow the basic scheme of Gurdjieff's work, which claimed to engage the physical, emotional, and mental spheres in a balanced manner while emphasizing a "fourth factor": the mind in itself, beyond its cognitive, rational, and active aspects. (Naranjo, 2010, p.161)

Over time Naranjo came to the view that psychotherapy itself constitutes a dual path which embraces both self-knowledge and spontaneity, and as such can be viewed as a synthesis of the Apollonian and Dionysian spiritual traditions. In this sense, the SAT programme can be conceived as the integration of four spiritual

¹ In the interview entitled *The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom* Foucault says the following about spirituality: "By spirituality I mean – but I'm not sure this definition can hold for very long – the subject's attainment of a certain mode of being and the transformations that the subject must carry out on itself to attain this mode of being" (Foucault, 2000a, p.294). Foucault's characteristic wariness with precise definitions also speaks to the difficulty that exists around our cultural associations with the loaded notion of spirituality.

paths – Esoteric Christian, Buddhist, Dionysian and Apollonian - and viewed as the experiential melting pot of these diverse dynasties.

The overlapping edges of these combined traditions are placed alongside each other within the SAT programme, with the intention of systematically addressing our collective and individual truths through the deliberate experiencing of self and other. These truths of collective and individual being are approached through a variety of technologies that facilitate the exploration of the self on three levels: firstly, the experience of the self as ego or mask, essentially limited and limiting in nature, necessarily and ontologically ‘fallen’ from the grace of full awareness; secondly, the experience of the self’s potential for thinking, feeling and doing above and beyond the ego’s limitations; and thirdly, the experience of the self as the experience of consciousness, the unifying ground or stage on which our psychic life is played out. The ‘truth’ to be experienced is a continuous thread of these three intertwined dimensions of self, and the resulting experience of identity as perhaps more uncertain and shifting than what Aristotle called the “unexamined” identity.

As we can see from this brief description of content and intent, the SAT programme is conspicuously, unashamedly, an assemblage or *bricolage*. A participant going through the full SAT programme will be exposed to the enneagram of personality, Buddhist meditation, spontaneous movement, group therapy, theatre for reparation, re-parenting, re-birthing, peer therapy, and a time line (a replay of similar problematic scenes stretching back into childhood, and adapted from Neuro-linguistic Programming). Of these the enneagram of personality, Buddhist meditation and peer therapy are the only constants across the three or four eight day residential retreats that comprise the programme (these retreats are normally programmed at yearly intervals). From the perspective of the disciplines, such a bricolage is an anathema, creating as it does a territory occupied by apparently conflicting discourses, and therefore lacking the rigour of a sustained and exclusive claim to truth. However, the principle of bricolage is easily sustained within a Foucauldian ethos in which the disputed territory of absolute truth as generalizable is replaced by a consideration and

embrace for difference, diversity and specificity and the relations of power between discourses and practices.

Whilst this idea of the bricolage is conceptually relevant, in terms of participants' experience it is the *enneagram of personality* that stands out as the most clearly defined body of knowledge that participants are actively and consciously learning. This diagnostic tool provides an ongoing point of reference for the other components of the SAT programme; it is, so to speak, the glue that holds the bricolage together. It is worth, therefore, spending a little time describing this particular "technology of self" (Foucault and Rabinow, 2000c, pp.223-251), said to derive from the Christian esoteric tradition. Whilst some special attention to the enneagram of personality perhaps desirable, given its central role in the SAT programme, bearing in mind the deliberate eclecticism of the SAT programme, it is perhaps more useful to focus attention on an overarching ethos than to dwell on each of the component elements (for a general description of the psycho-spiritual principles underlying the enneagram see Appendix 1.). This ethos can be seen as being rooted in Naranjo's origins as a Gestalt psychotherapist. If Gestalt psychotherapy as an overt and active 'technique' has a relatively minor part to play in the curriculum of the SAT programme, its spirit informs the experience as a whole, not only the interpretation of the 'problem' (i.e. the interruption of humans' organic wisdom) but also with its proposed 'solutions'. To illustrate Naranjo's perspective on this ethos it is worth quoting at length from his book *Gestalt Therapy: The Attitude and Practice of an Atheoretical Experimentalism* (2000). As the title of his book suggests, the Gestalt approach in which Naranjo is interested is derived from a central valuation of the raw material of human *experience* in determining the value or 'quality' of an individual and their relations. The richness of experience as a source of understanding stands in contrast to the 'emptiness' of technical knowledge:

Much has been written on psychotherapy as technique – that is, from the standpoint of *effects* upon the patient of the therapist's actions or interpretations. In discussions of this sort, the patient's experiences are always seen as *elicited* by deliberate choices of behaviour on the part of the therapist. What is left out, however, is the notion that *experience may be passed on*, and that, as life proceeds from life, a certain depth of experience may perhaps be only brought about by the presence of

another being partaking in that depth, and not by manipulations. If attitude is a deeper issue than technique, and if technique issues from attitudes, experience is still a deeper issue than attitudes and constitutes *their* source. Without the appropriate attitude techniques become empty forms. Without experience even attitude becomes second-hand dogmas. Just as a dead organism cannot reproduce itself, mere dead attitudes cannot engender any corresponding attitude in another being. Experience, on the other hand, is self-duplicating. It creates the external forms that convey its pulsating heart. (Naranjo, 2000, pp.16-17)

The intention of the SAT, therefore, is to create an environment in which trials, tribulations and joys of character and *beyond* character can be *experienced*, individually and collectively in such a way that certain knowledge and attitudes are awoken or promoted which favour creative growth and carry forward the individual psycho-spiritual journey. But what are the attitudes proposed by Gestalt therapy? Naranjo identifies three attitudes as follows:

These three [attitudes] – an appreciation of actuality, of awareness, and of responsibility – constitute the core attitudes of Gestalt. Though three different attitudes in appearance, they are but aspects of facets of a single mode of being in the world. To be responsible (response-able) entails being present, being here. And being truly present is being aware. Awareness, in turn, is presence – reality – and a condition incompatible with the illusion of irresponsibility by means of which we avoid living our lives (or knowing that we do live them, whatever we may think). (2000, p.7)

Whilst Naranjo describes values specific to Gestalt therapy, this description is transposable to the SAT programme. These values are intended not only to speak to us as a potential mode of subjectivity, a means of being in the world and experiencing self and other, they are also intended to inform and create a style or principle of transmission of experience, teaching and learning; in short, a pedagogy. This pedagogy is characterized, as Naranjo makes explicit in his description of the Gestaltian therapeutic relationship, by a principle of contagion. This contagion is made possible by the quality of the relationship, and the quality of the relationship is in turn made possible by the depth of experience of its participants and the possibility and practice of authenticity; in short, by presence.

This pedagogy of presence can be considered especially significant for the teachers who participate in the SAT. Having said this, it is important to underline that the SAT programme was not designed for teachers. If teachers have been encouraged

to participate as part of Naranjo's commitment to the "*democratization of psychotherapy*—or, on a broader scale, *an education that teaches people to work spiritually and psychologically on themselves*" (Naranjo, 2009, p. 169), the teacher is primarily involved and addressed as a person and not as a teacher. This 'accidental' nature of the involvement of teachers means that the SAT programme is not designed with teachers in mind, and it does not aim to address the specifics of their professional situation, and thus falls outside what would commonly be regarded as professional development in teaching. Ironically, it is this 'outsider' status and flavour that perhaps makes the SAT interesting. By falling outside dominant discourses the SAT programme takes on the condition of being *sui generis*, and thus offers teachers the benefit of something new, offering the challenge and interest of an experience that comes from 'left field'. Considering Pignatelli's (1993, 1993b) call for a new way of teachers knowing themselves, this is highly significant. Pignatelli challenges the status quo of teacher identity work from a Foucauldian perspective that calls into question the progressive agendas rooted in the 'truths' of the human sciences, and proposes instead an ongoing refusal to unquestioningly 'tow the line' and a parallel development of alternative teacher agencies:

Freedom emerges as a call to refuse oppressive, debilitating identities 'discovered' through the human sciences; as skepticism toward well-meaning, progressive agendas; as a restless imagining; as, in fact, a risk. This has important consequences for framing a notion of teacher agency. Where agency is guided by technicist or therapeutic [teacher as 'saviour'] concerns, it remains indebted to, and enmeshed in, the work of the human sciences . . . Put differently, truths arrived at through orderly method, scientific inquiry, and prescriptive theorizing predispose and deeply constrain the way one understands and practices teacher agency. Therefore, proposing an alternative way of thinking about teacher agency involves teachers finding alternative ways of knowing the truth about themselves. (1993b, p. 420)

It can be argued that the SAT programme addresses the need identified by Pignatelli to attend to teacher agency, replacing the technicist or 'teacher as saviour' discourse with a psycho-spiritual discourse which seems far removed from the standard fare of institutional school life.

However, whilst the SAT is notably 'left field' and does not sit easily alongside the

standard fare of contemporary teacher development opportunities, there are some features of the SAT experience that are 'schoolish'. If 'school' is not explicit in the SAT's 'content', it is present in other forms, indeed the SAT programme is sometimes referred to as a "school" by Naranjo (2009). This is not the institution of school, and reference to the SAT as a school is best understood in a spiritual-philosophical body of knowledge-practice, a site or situation of teaching and learning. Whilst not 'institutional', the programme contains basic elements that will be familiar to teachers – there is a loose timetable, different 'subjects' divided into different periods of the day, and there is a recognizable group of 'teachers' and a larger body of 'students', and, accordingly, a loose distribution of power/authority. Recognizable 'teaching' occurs, and recognizable 'learning'. It is a recognizable pedagogic environment despite the teaching and learning experience (characterized by respect for others, listening, flexibility, purposive informality, physical ease, and 'authenticity') being noticeably alternative to highly managed institutional settings, even where these settings are grounded in a similar 'institutional' rhetoric. The fact that the SAT programme is easily recognized as a pedagogic experience is perhaps one of its most important features when considering the participation of teachers. The fact that significant teaching and learning occurs within a group under conditions that are simultaneously recognizable to teachers, yet different in many key aspects, permits critical comparisons to be made, and permits teachers to situate the knowledge base of the SAT within the pedagogic exchange. Teachers studying the same information and concepts in books, or doing distance learning online, are unlikely to be able to make the same connections with their own working life, as teachers immersed in the group learning experience provided by the SAT.

Ultimately, it is intended that the knowledge, *ethos* and intense experience of a shared humanity, a shared journey, the balm and longing for community and communication of that same journey, will provide the fertile and 'magical' ground for transformation. The conceptual and practical or experiential bricolage assembled by Naranjo would appear to be in no small measure at the service of the creation of an authentic, if temporary, community, and Naranjo attributes what he sees as the SAT's effectiveness in no small measure to the 'magic' that can occur in

groups (Naranjo, 2010, p.168). Undeniably, the fact that 50 – 100 people separated from their routine and their familiar circumstances are ‘thrown’ together over a period of 9 days, and will (ideally) all come together again during a total of 3 or 4 retreats, is a significant feature of the experience. The importance of this group cannot be underestimated, not only because people come to recognize the truth of, learn about, and negotiate ‘otherness’, or because they can see their idiosyncrasies and commonalities reflected in others, but also because, according to Naranjo, ‘healing’ occurs in relationship, just as the madness of character or neurosis is formed in relationship (Naranjo, 1994). The SAT is a microcosm of the relational world - and intensity and ambiguity of relationship, or of a resistance to relationship, is a key experience in disturbing the fixed ground of personalities. Furthermore, it is the group format that permits a democratization of the psychological and spiritual and facilitates an economy of participation that means that teachers’ psycho-spiritual growth can feasibly be attended to *en masse*.

As a collective experiential rollercoaster, Naranjo likens the SAT programme to an “initiation” (2010, p.168), a shared cultural form that denotes a point on a journey, a rite of passage marked by a sense of a before and after, whose survival implies merit, not necessarily from the achievement of set goals (our all too familiar ‘targets’), but by virtue of participation. The SAT is to be regarded as an initiation “in the sense that it brings people to an unknown dimension: it sets them forth on a path that—in spite of not being a predetermined one—is a process that becomes irresistible as the journeyers begin to comprehend its meaning” (ibid.). An important parallel can be made here with Foucault’s understanding of *testing*² - produced as an “event” and occurring through struggle, ordeal, contest (testing almost as a rite of passage) - as the source of a now discredited truth (Miller, 1993, p.271). This is a form of truth accessed or ‘created’ through what Foucault terms the limit experience, and requiring and fostering a “*limit-attitude*” (Foucault

² This idea of *testing* should not be confused with *examination* which is the term that Foucault uses to describe those techniques of power that are used to describe individuals and to distribute them around a norm. Teachers are normally highly implicated in the procedures and consequences of examination. Testing, on the other hand, can be understood as the harder ethical or material challenges of life, through which we come to grow as psycho-spiritual entities. Testing can be understood as the central experience of mythology and fairy tales.

and Rabinow, 1991, p.45, emphasis in original). It is, in part, this truth as event that stands out as a resistance to the problematized political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth in which teachers find themselves so implicated.

Up until now this description the SAT programme has been largely theoretical. As a final touch of perspective, the addition of another dimension, I will briefly try to describe a typical day in the SAT programme, a kind of 'Day in the Life Of' a SAT participant. This is relatively easy to do if we were to limit the description to the mornings, but becomes more difficult when including the afternoons, as the content of the afternoons varies greatly at each level of the SAT. The variation in the afternoon sessions is part of what marks the progressive, sequential nature of the programme. This said, I will describe an typical day of the SAT 1, said to be the 'Dionysian SAT', involving above all the exploration of self and the embrace of its limits and possibilities. The day begins at 7.30am with the group all together doing some kind of body/movement work. This work is not thought of as exercise, nor is it purely expressive; rather, it looks to establish a contact between the physical body, thought, and emotion, and to open up the communicative possibilities between these three elements. To use a rather common metaphor, the movement work of the morning can be seen as the ploughing of the field in which the seeds of the day's themes will be planted. The aim is to upset the body-mind-soul constellation described by Foucault as 'docile', and to expose the fertile possibilities of its underside. This bodywork takes between 60 and 90 minutes, and is followed by breakfast. At 10am the group comes together again for a meditation session which, between explication, meditation 'proper', and comments and questions, lasts approximately one hour. The style or focus of this meditation will vary – in SAT 1 it is Taravada, SAT 2 it is Zen, in SAT 3 it is Tibetan. These variants can be considered as different methodologies for the exploration of the mind, and the question 'Who are we?' As I am describing a day of SAT 1, the Taravada meditation will focus on two practices – that of awareness (i.e. what is occurring here and now), and shamata (to stop doing and enter into silence). Whilst meditation is generally associated with esoteric, other-worldly aspirations, the intention of meditation in this context is rooted firmly in the idea that meditation provides the subject with 'laboratory' conditions for the exploration of

self, it is a microscope in which the patterns and compulsions of our thinking are magnified on a neutral backdrop of inactivity. If the 'goal' is inactivity, we become all too aware of the nature of our activity. It is important to add that the meditation practice in the SAT contains the important variant of being conducted in pairs. Participants do not generally meditate alone, but sitting in front of another person, and at some point visual contact is established. The inter-personal nature of the meditation, the meeting of (un?)defended gazes is one of the most powerful experiences and possibilities that takes root during the SAT. For some people it may be the first time that they have met and held the gaze of another person. The end of meditation 'proper' is followed by an opportunity for people to share their experience with their meditation partners, and then to put comments and questions to the facilitator.

Following on from meditation, the morning session continues with enneagram related activities. Some part of enneagram theory will be explained to the group, and participants will engage with this theory either through individuals reporting to the whole group, or through work in pairs or larger groups. Generally this work is exploratory; participants will explore their experience/behaviour, or help others in their explorations, in relation to a question, or a theme that is in some way generated by the enneagram and its theory of personality/neurosis. An example of a question/theme explored in the SAT 1 is 'What are you like in respect to money, work, friendship, romance, family?'. This question is explored in fairly large groups who are working together because they believe they are the same personality type. The group is asked to look for differences and similarities in behavioural and attitudinal patterns and to be as concrete as possible, giving examples of 'typical' or 'default' positions. This group experience is often highly animated and sometimes tensions arise as people try to match 'theory' and with the diversity of their experiences. Some people may feel themselves to not quite 'fit' with the group in important areas of their life and can move on to another group to see if there is a better 'fit'. In other cases the group may report to an individual that they feel them to be 'different'. This group work will probably take place about half way through the SAT 1, and is a watershed moment in establishing a principle of self-exploration. Ultimately, each individual is

responsible for identifying in which group they feel there is the best fit. This can be a painful and difficult process, one which often reveals how far a person is from being able to 'see themselves', and it can provide clear evidence of the subject's inability to get a perspective on themselves, their difficulty in establishing a vantage point for Foucauldian thought. At some point, depending on time, these personality groups will be expected to report back to the whole group on their findings, and this gives further opportunity for people to familiarize themselves with the 'profiles' of the different groups and to see themselves in relief.

As well as this type of group work, very closely related to the enneagram, the morning session will very often include a practice known as 'mutual therapy'. This is essentially an opportunity for participants to engage in peer therapy through the organization of a chain therapist-client-therapist-client that runs through the whole group. Each participant will be the therapist of one person and the client of another, these two relationships remaining fixed throughout the retreat (i.e. people stay with the same patient or therapist). If peer therapy is 'on the menu' on any day, each person will spend some time in the role of patient and some time in the role of therapist. The 'turns' generally last from 15 to 45 minutes. Clients and therapists are given instructions regarding the theme and how to work together in any particular session. Particularly important given the possible stress of assuming the role of therapist among participants who do not feel themselves to be 'qualified', the sessions in the SAT 1 emphasize a basic attitude of listening, sometimes with the possibility of very basic interventions. From this perspective the 'therapist' is not a figure who understands the secrets of the clients soul, and can conjure up a cure for their 'illness'; rather, they are a person who is making themselves available to their client through the cultivation of listening and an empathic presence. It is this availability that is the a-theoretical 'skill' of the therapist, the key feature of their role. The therapist does not provide answers, advice, or interpretations; rather, they facilitate the client's self-exploration. The role of therapist is difficult for different reasons – some will find the more neutral/passive attitude of the role the most difficult, accustomed as they are to act vigorously upon the other, while some therapists will find it more difficult to become increasingly active in a session, worried as they might be about getting it

right and feeling exposed because they are not 'professionals'. Likewise, the client will often face their difficulties when asked to talk about themselves outside of the conventions of conversation.

The mutual therapy ingredient in the SAT is the opportunity to establish an intimate relationship within the group experience of the SAT, at least in terms of the formal content (other spaces for fostering 'special' relations exist in the rest times). Ideally the client-therapist relationship will be one of the most important points of reference for participants, an anchor which the participants return to repeatedly over the days. Much can be learnt about the self and other in this space, which is formalized (i.e. has clear roles) but at the same time democratized (i.e. the therapist is not working from a basis of being a qualified 'expert', but from the basis of being human). This has interesting effects in terms of the relations of power occurring in the mutual therapy relationship. Both therapist and client are very much exploring, together, a terrain filled with uncertainties and ambiguities. Finding a way together through a relationship with ambiguous referents of power, or, conversely, floundering in anger, dissatisfaction, and inauthenticity, mutual therapy, when included, is an important part of the days activities, and one in which the person is revealed to themselves and to the other in a variety of ways.

The morning session over, a two-hour lunch break follows. Whilst this may appear ample time in the first days, as the week progresses two hours begins to feel too short as people take advantage of the lunchtime to catch up on their rest and recharge their batteries. This will be needed because the afternoon sessions are usually intense and can finish late. If the morning can be described as more theoretical learning, the afternoons could be considered a time for experiential learning. In the SAT 1 two different stages for experiential learning are provided – the first, spontaneous movement, looks to develop outer activity or movement from an inner attention or self-relation, and the second, theatre for reparation, looks to develop inner activity or movement from an outer attention or relations with others. The group, sometimes divided into two depending on numbers, will spend approximately two hours in spontaneous movement, and two hours in theatre, with a break in between the two. Spontaneous movement is a practice

that can be likened to a meditation in movement. Its aim is to cultivate the ability to establish an ongoing connection with the instinctual communication of the body; the impulses that reflect the bodies 'understanding' and expression of desire and need, or that reflect its truth. If, normally, the body is a 'docile' appendage to our reasoned intentionality, a tool at the disposition of our life project and subject to the ethical and institutional discipline of our times, then spontaneous movement looks to create a knowledge of what the body does or does not do when left to its own devices. The work requires the creation of certain roles (mover and witness) and certain conditions (the person moving has their eyes closed), but beyond a very loose framework the participants are set free into a space/time continuum which is characterized by a lack of rules/indications. During the two hours dedicated to spontaneous movement each afternoon a participant will be both witness and mover, and nearly always will have participated in some preparatory activities of bodywork. Movers and witnesses work in pairs, alternating roles, and they get an opportunity also to share their experiences. Sharing provides an opportunity to attempt to 'make sense' of what has been a non-verbal exercise (sounds but not words are permitted when moving).

The inner to outer gesture of spontaneous movement (facilitated through having eyes closed) is inverted in theatre which, as a rule, relies upon creating a dialogue with the other (including the audience). From this situation of dialogue with the other, frequently taking the form of a conflict (i.e. x wants to divorce y, but y is certain that their differences can be resolved), a greater understanding of self is cultivated and perhaps some inner movement generated which will allow the 'actor' to go through an inner 'reparation' and movement, and thus to go out toward the other through a gesture that might previously have been unavailable. Theatre is perhaps the most feared activity of the SAT 1. Though the different theatre teachers have different ways of working, it is likely that a participant's turn to 'act' is seen as their moment of greatest exposure. Even if levels of exposure can vary greatly – from being on stage alone, to sharing it with ten people – the fact of a stage and an audience, and the possibility of conflict, and of being proven insufficient to the event, is what generates the dramatic tension that

underlies each performance. In most cases participants, when they are on stage, are operating at the limit of the possibilities. The theatre teacher will, generally speaking, direct the improvisation to a point that the actor, or actors, becomes 'cornered', and, in order to survive the moment and remain viable as a dramatic personae, must become aware of the impasse and find a new response within their repertoire. The actor thus finds themselves doing, saying, and feeling things that they would not normally do, say or feel. This 'metamorphosis', even if temporary, is powerful, and is all the more powerful because it is witnessed by the audience and the other actors on stage. It becomes a collective experience of the 'otherness' that might be cohabiting the familiar '*meness*'.

Theatre normally marks the end of the working day in the SAT 1 programme. It will probably be late – anytime between nine and ten o'clock. If normal activities have finished relatively early a film might be shown before bed, otherwise people are left to their own devices. Such is the nature of the programme that sleep is often difficult to come by. People are too nervous to sleep well, or are sharing rooms and get disturbed by others, or will stay up late talking. Come what may, no matter how tired, people are encouraged to make the effort to get up early to start the daily cycle again with early morning movement. And so as the days go by, people become progressively more tired, and, usually, progressively more comfortable within the previously unfamiliar dynamics of the programme. It is most likely, as they fall into the bed at the end of each day, that most participants would agree with Naranjo's description of the SAT as a kind of "initiation" (op.cit.), a rite of passage which requires strength and courage to sustain yourself within, and comprises a series of mini-victories at the edges of self.

Chapter 3: A Methodology

A Qualitative Case Study

This research is conceived as a qualitative case study to evaluate a specific contemporary phenomenon - the participation of teachers in a psycho-spiritual retreat programme – and uses theory to support and inform the generation of data and to place that same data within an analytical framework. The case study approach has been chosen for its evaluative tradition and because the research questions circulate around a central ‘how’ question, broadly defined as ‘How do teachers experience the SAT programme and how does their experience of themselves within that programme subsequently play out in terms of teacher identity and professional practice?’ The use of case study is supported by Yin’s definition of the circumstances for preferring the “explanatory” form of the case study:

In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context. (2003, p.1)

Yin provides another argument for the suitability of case study in relation to this particular research; the importance of *context*: “You would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study” (ibid.). Context is critical to my conception of the research: on one level, it is the context of the subject themselves and the way in which this subjectivity has been ‘worked-on’ during the programme, and on the other level it is the organizational context of schools and schooling. The interest in the broad context compensates for the fact that this research presents a “situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data point”. For this reason “the case study may be used to *explore* those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes” (ibid., p.15).

It is evident that the diversity of subjectivity, and the diversity of contexts in which this subjectivity takes shape and operates, means that the research has to encompass any number of outcomes, some of which may be 'predicted' theoretically and from experience, others that may arise out of the particularities of teachers as people and as professionals or the particularities of any specific context. If and when particularities arise, the research focus will remain on the "holistic" or global nature of the research as informed by the theoretical background (Yin, 1994). If the individualizing nature of the intervention being studied (the SAT programme's focuses on both the generalities and particularities of self), necessitates a regard for the whole person in data collection, *their* story as *they* tell it, data analysis is filtered through global concerns generated theoretically, by way of Foucault and other thinkers. This is in keeping with Yin's definition of the features of case study as benefiting "from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis" (Yin, 2003, p.14).

Data Collection

Although the case study has often been characterized by multiple methods of data collection (Robson, 2002, p.178), this feature has not been applied in this research. From the outset the interview was conceived as the only way to access the complexities of self and its interactions with context and with *itself*. The use of interview clearly has its disadvantages for the researcher, such as: the lack of standardization and possible biases generate concerns about reliability; they are by nature time consuming, especially when one-to-one and when considering the task of transcription; also, they can be difficult to analyse, especially when open-ended questioning is used. However, such disadvantages were considered to be outweighed by the interview's "potential of providing rich and highly illuminating material" (Robson, 2002, p.273). Open-ended questioning when combined with a semi-structured format (as was the case in this study), allows the interviewer greater flexibility in the approach to gathering data, and facilitates attempts to elicit what the respondent really believes, as well as a co-operative approach to the construction of this 'knowledge' which should be based on rapport. As long as the interviewer can maintain a certain control over the direction of the questions and answers, the responsive nature of the semi-structured, open-ended interview

means that a good interviewer can follow the train of thinking that is emerging from the respondent rather than coming at the field from a series of fixed assumptions or preconceptions, such as might be the case in a highly structured interview in which all questions are pre-determined. The 'tailor-made' possibilities of the semi-structured, open-ended interview are enhanced when this is carried out in a one-to-one format (as opposed to a focus group, for example). The focus on one interviewee enabled me to 'construct' the interview as it unfolded, creating the sense of rapport that was one of the key means by which I hoped interviewees would feel they could speak freely and honestly.

This is not to say that I arrived at the interview as a 'blank slate'. The interview technique adopted most resembles the "focused interview" as conceived by Kitwood (in Cohen and Manion, 1994; see also Merton *et al.*, 1956); i.e. "situational analysis" previous to the interviews was used to generate an interview guide covering the major areas of enquiry and research questions. The interviews subsequently concentrate on the subjective experience of those involved. During the pilot interview stage, the prior knowledge informing the interview was not the result of a specific "situational analysis" within the framework of the research; rather, it was a knowledge accumulated by myself prior to beginning the research. This knowledge comprised a long experience of working with teachers and considerable familiarity with the theory and practice of the SAT programme. This proved invaluable in eliciting "thick description" (Geertz 1973) from teachers. As the research progressed, theoretical reading provided a further element by which to focus interviews. As Merton and Kendel argue:

Equipped in advance with a content analysis, the interviewer can readily distinguish the objective facts of the case from the subjective definitions of the situation. He [sic] thus becomes alert to the entire field of 'selective response'. When the interviewer, through his familiarity with the objective situation, is able to recognise symbolic or functional silences, 'distortions', avoidances, or blockings, he is more prepared to explore their implications. (Merton and Kendel, in Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.290)

If Merton and Kendel highlight foreknowledge's potential for overcoming negative possibilities, in my own experience foreknowledge helped 'guide' or facilitate the interviewees' elaboration of their own experience. In this sense, foreknowledge

facilitated what might approximate to the therapeutic relation as understood by Naranjo's characterization of the Gestalt therapist as one who can facilitate *experience* from the grounds of their own experience (Naranjo, 2000). Moreover, my own psychotherapeutic training in the humanist school enabled me to occupy a therapeutic style as proposed by Carl Rogers:

Rogers [...] identified a number of qualities in the interviewer which he deemed essential: that she bases her work on attitudes of acceptance and permissiveness; that she accepts the client's responsibility for his own situations; that she permits the client to explain his problem in his own way; and that she does nothing that would in any way arouse the client's defences. (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.288)

These interview techniques and styles were seen to be consistent within the broader context of the research, as the interview itself, both for the researcher and the interviewee, grew out of their interest in and experience of the psychotherapeutic genre, which provided the common point of reference, the shared language. If some level of empathy could be assumed by the interviewees' willingness to be interviewed and by a common history, a solidarity, this had to be nurtured, not just so that interviewees would talk, but that they might also talk from the heart, that it would acquire the consistency, and eloquence, of natural, undefended speech:

[T]he main purpose of using the interview in research is that it is believed that in an interpersonal encounter people are more likely to disclose aspects of themselves, their thoughts, their feelings and values, than they would in a less human situation. In other words, the distinctively human element in the interview is necessary to its 'validity'. (Kitwood, in Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.282)

Naturalness was intended as the baseline condition of the interview. Its intensity varied across a spectrum from relaxed, friendly and light-hearted, to densely thoughtful, to emotive and emotionally charged. 'Felt speech', sometimes accompanied by tears, can, above all, be seen to be further evidence of a subjective truth being elaborated and communicated. At such moments, questions of reliability or duplicity of interpretation appear churlish.

Hearing is Believing?

There is very often an underlying assumption within the use of interviews of “pure information transfer”, whereby “if the respondent is sincere, accurate information may be obtained”, and “there is a permanent, consistent ‘core’ to the personality, about which a person will give information under certain conditions” (Kitwood, in Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.274). However, in general

[i]t has now come to be recognized that insight of this kind is very rarely achieved and that when it is, it is after long and difficult effort, usually in the context of repeated clinical interviews. (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.283)

Convery (1999), talking specifically about research with teachers, also casts doubt on the assumption that the information offered to researchers by teachers is not ‘manipulated’, consciously or unconsciously, by the teacher who knows themselves to be situated in a field criss-crossed with expectations. It is undeniable there are indeed problems with the reliability of data in such an intimate exchange. We can be fairly sure that most interviewees will want, at the very least, to be liked by the interviewer, and *vice versa*. Furthermore, some interviewees may feel compelled by a desire to impress with their answers. The search for reliable data is certainly compromised by the social visibility of the respondent in the interview setting, a visibility that can be avoided by the use, for example, of anonymous questionnaires.

However, there is a case to be argued that significant knowledge and understanding can also be constructed in the interview setting, i.e. in dialogue. Respondents can, perhaps, come to know and understand things over the course of a conversation that they would not necessarily know when sat in a room on their own with a questionnaire. Clearly, in adopting the interview as the method of data collection one enters into a situation of swings and roundabouts. I would argue that the interviews of this study took place in particularly favourable circumstances with respect to the respondents’ disposition to talk openly and freely. All respondents had been voluntarily examining themselves within a challenging process of ‘self-knowledge’ and its uncomfortable truths, and were ‘sensitized’ to the possibilities for authenticity and transparency. This represented

a privileged opportunity to 'get under the skin' of teachers. The risks, both of wilful distortions and silences, were, I believe, considerably reduced and favoured the avoidance of the "bad faith narratives" identified by Craib, in which the respondents storytelling naïvely (and perhaps totally unconsciously) serves to defend them (and us) from truths too difficult to be borne, or simply to place us within the "conventions and usages our culture provides us with" (2000, p.65).

If there is a possibility of "bad faith" within the research, it might perhaps be found in the uncritical adoption of the new language of subjectivity provided by the SAT programme, and, in relation to this, the prevalence of responses within the interview aimed simply to please the interviewer. Attempts to mitigate this were built into the interview design/style through a concern to elicit concrete examples that illustrated changes '*in action*', in the belief that new or evolving 'behaviour' gives the most compelling and important evidence for changing beliefs and is difficult to fabricate convincingly. Also, the questioning style, in the main, was analytic: that is to say, it required the interviewee to elaborate, interpret, and make connections. This means that the interviewees' attention was firmly situated within the nexus of their own narrative. For example, one such 'starting' question, 'What was the most significant thing you learnt in the SAT programme, and how do you think it has influenced you at work?', demands an answer that is not easy to manipulate; rather, it must be *elaborated* in the moment, as learning or communication. These answers come alive by being perceived at the point and in the moment of telling. It is from here that language "sings". This valuation of the 'internal' quality of language as grounds for its validity has exponents, as Robson (2002) points out:

Altheide and Johnson (1994) argue that the fields in the humanities such as history and literature employ evaluative criteria such as elegance, coherence and consistency which provide more appropriate standards for qualitative studies. While they may appear imprecise to traditional positivistically inclined researchers, it is worth noting that even a notion so vague as elegance is used as a central criterion for the choice of one explanation over a rival in fields such as theoretical physics, the very heartland of natural science. (pp.167-168)

In relation to validity-reliability, triangulation between data from interviewers was

used to look for some kind of coherence. The global or holistic evaluative picture is based upon the coherence of trends balanced by an understanding of the individuality of each interviewee. In building this collage, data analysis has been concerned not just with volumes of evidence to cram into the code 'bins', rather evidence was deemed to be *evidence* on the basis of its internal qualities as narrative, and its plausibility within the larger narrative of the interviewee (plausibility, in part being assessed in psychological terms).

Some Logistics of Talking

The research began with a series of 4 pilot interviews in Mexico, followed by 6 interviews in Spain. Although these interviews were focused by virtue of my own knowledge and experience, and provided what I consider to be significant data, they simultaneously provided me with the "exploratory pole" for the subsequent research design (Robson, 2002, p.185), used by researchers "to refine their data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed" (Yin, 1994, p.74). Procedures included explaining the context and broad objectives of the research, describing the way I had come to be doing the research, and the deliberate creation of a relaxed, informal setting. The interviews were audio taped, and full transcriptions subsequently made. Over the course of the pilot interviews, the theme/question guide became less and less important, and the interview unfolded more conversationally, the themes and focuses held exclusively in my head. This conversation was facilitated by moving my attention away from the guide and towards the answers being given.

One other evolution in interview technique was how to end the interview, which had proven more difficult than beginning the interview. If all interviews began with some professional details (length of service etc), on the basis of the pilot experience one 'formal' question was added to finish the interviews as an attempt to explore the interview as a formative experience: 'Is there anything that you have learnt during this interview? Is there anything that surprised you?' Different answers arose from this question, but a common theme was surprise at the depth of the interview, implying that it had been felt as a journey through something, a small-scale Foucauldian 'event'.

The interview style, developed over the course of the pilot interviews, and lasting between one hour and two hours, served as the basis for the additional 10 interviews conducted during the research, bringing the total number of interviews to 20. All participants were volunteers who responded either to an invitation to participate in the research extended to them during a SAT, or via an email distributed via the SAT database. Those responding positively to the invitation were chosen on the following basis:

- Enneagram number – as enneagram theory and practice locates different ethical problems for different personality types, it was important that kaleidoscope of possible transformations was reflected in the study. A view of changing teacher identity dominated by one character type would have skewed the true multiplicity of learning around teacher identity and agency. If we are to believe enneagram theory, or at least the validity of teachers' identification with a particular character type, then a balanced sample permits a more generalizable theoretical application across the teacher population as a whole.
- Accessibility. I had to be able to reach them fairly easily. For this reason Spanish respondents are from Barcelona or its surrounds, and Mexican respondents from Chiapas.
- Nationality. The research proposed roughly equal division between Mexican and Spanish respondents
- Gender. Though the SAT programme attracts a larger proportion of women, an effort was made to include a significant number of men (6) in the sample.
- Age. A variety of ages was deemed desirable, but not determinate in selection or non-selection.
- Teaching level. A variety of teaching levels from pre-school to university was deemed desirable, but not determinate in selection or non-selection. This diversity was intended to illuminate and reflect common themes running through teacher identity, especially in relation to structure and performativity.

The total of twenty interviews were finally made up of eight interviewees from Mexico and twelve from Spain. Five of the Spanish interviews took place in an office in Barcelona that had been lent to me for the purpose. These Barcelona interviews were conducted with people who responded to the email invitation sent out by the SAT's organizers in Spain, and was restricted to people who were living relatively nearby and could travel to the office. In this case, the interview was the first time we had met, although we will have had email or telephone exchanges to organize the day and time. Also, seven interviews in Spain were conducted 'on location' in a SAT programme. Interviews taking place during a SAT programme were done on the basis of an informal invitation, and time was found during one of the breaks. I did not 'know' these interviewees either, in any significant way, although we might have seen each other, or had some conversation during the days previous to the interview. In the case of Mexico, because of my more direct involvement in organizing the SAT programme in Mexico, I had had previous contact with all of the Mexican interviewees as I had been present during their SAT itself. Three of the Mexican interviews took place during one of the SAT retreats, whilst the other five occurred in a variety of locations, including houses and restaurants. In the case of the five interviews occurring outside the SAT, emails were sent out to people who had been identified as teachers asking if they would be willing to participate..

A brief description of each interviewee is provided below:

Ángeles (México). Having worked in 'popular' education with adults, Ángeles had entered secondary education in a small, progressive private school in Mexico. At 36 years of age, after four years of teaching experience she had been promoted to school director where she was currently working. Though she still recognizes herself as a social activist, she can also see that in becoming a teacher she has, to some degree, climbed out of the front line 'trenches' to be absorbed within another, less confrontational ethos addressing itself to building the new society (generations) rather than opposing the existing structures. Ángeles had arrived at the SAT programme because she had become involved in therapy subsequent to a break up with her partner and father of her child. Faced, she jokes, with a choice

between killing herself and entering the psychotherapeutic world, she chose the latter. At the time of the interview she had completed the SAT programme.

Antonio (Spain). A young male teacher of 28 years, who just starting teaching in Spain after some experience teaching maths in the USA where he had experienced some difficulties fitting in to what he saw as a very different work culture. Antonio's first love is music, and he has come to teaching as not as a vocation but because of the need to find employment. At the time of the interview Antonio had just begun the SAT programme, his participation in part responding to his pre-existing interest in esoteric, psychological and philosophical reading.

Araceli (Spain). A 52-year-old female teacher with 24 years experience in different posts in the Spanish education system. At the time of the interview she occupied a leadership role within the department concerned with providing in-service training to teachers. Though she had arrived at a position of responsibility and influence, Araceli's professional career had been characterized by her oppositional, conflictive and imposing tendencies. She regarded herself as having been a 'black sheep' and had suffered her whole life from a sense of being marginal and simultaneously too big, too imposing for normal life. The interview took place at during the fourth module of the SAT programme. She was, at the time, recovering from a physical collapse that had left her unable to continue 'business as normal' and had forced her to acknowledge, permit and to express her vulnerability. She regards this as a watershed moment, and there is a sense in which it can be seen as the moment for which the SAT programme has been preparing her.

Conrado (Spain). A middle-aged foreign language teacher at the primary school level in Spain, and specializing in English. Conrado, from a family of teachers (he jokes that they could open a school between them), began his teaching life at the age of 20, working for 10 years before a crisis which precipitated a 6 year break which saw him return to his home town and a life of more manual labour. During this time he is witness to the gap between his own ideals (that in part drove him out of education) and the reality of his daily thinking and feeling. Partly in response to encouragement (or pressure?) he was able to return to teaching

perhaps without the same idealistic drive, but in some ways better prepared to face the vicissitudes of institutional life and the power relations that Conrado found so difficult to negotiate. He had arrived at the SAT programme as a result of the recommendation of his therapist, who he had been consulting as a response to the feeling that he was losing his head, and this in turn in part provoked by difficult experiences related to his leadership role in a school. His interview occurred during his participation in the fourth and last module of the SAT programme.

Carla (Mexico). A female teacher of 58 years with 25 years of service. She teaches dressmaking in a state secondary school in Chiapas, Mexico. She herself had only completed her secondary education and finds a lot of the in-service teacher training she receives dry, theoretical and verbose. She describes herself as observant, practical, orderly and intelligent. She had no previous experience of psychotherapeutic processes and was persuaded to attend the SAT programme by her sister who had attended the year before. Carla's sister, knowing difficulties at work and in her private life, encouraged her to go, and the SAT programme had been her first experience of psychotherapeutic work. At the time of the interview she had attended the first three SAT retreats.

Cecilia (Spain). A female mathematics teacher in her early fifties. At the time of the interview she was working in a secondary school in Madrid and has been a teacher since 1980. She came to teaching during a period of seismic change in Spain with the end of the dictatorship of Franco. Her career had clearly been influenced by the political and ideological conflicts and shifts of those times. Her long career in teaching has given her ample opportunity for reflection and significant evolution, and this appears to have been furthered by her experience in the SAT. Notwithstanding, she is clear that she entered into the SAT programme for personal reasons, and had had various different experiences beforehand of psychotherapy and was familiar with an eclectic array of technologies of self.

Dora (Mexico). A female teacher of 43 years with 24 years experience. She trained as a pre-school teacher and works within the state pre-school system in Chiapas, México, and, at the time of the interview, was on placement to the technical team of a school supervision, where she was responsible for overseeing the work of

teachers in schools. Her main functions at the time were on-site supervisory visits and training. At the time of the interview she was considering returning to classroom teaching, as the experience of the SAT had awoken a fresh interest in being with children. She had had some involvement with psychotherapeutic processes outside the SAT programme. At the time of the interview she had completed the first two SAT retreats, and the interview took place during the third.

Erendida (Mexico). A female teacher of 40 years with nearly 20 years experience. She trained and worked as a pre-school teacher, and works in the state pre-school system in Oaxaca, Mexico. She had been a classroom teacher but at the time of the interview she had taken up a 3-year placement to the State Advisory Commission and her work now involves leading colleagues in various technical and organizational processes. She has some previous and ongoing involvement with psychotherapeutic processes, and described herself as being in difficult personal circumstances and looking for help when she decided to enter the SAT programme. At the time of the interview she had completed the first two SAT retreats, and the interview took place during the third retreat. It is worth noting that Erendida is a keen publicist of the SAT and has been responsible for persuading a number of teachers from Oaxaca to attend the programme.

Fernando (Mexico). A middle-aged, male special education teacher with 22 years experience in primary schools in Mexico. Previous to his participation in the SAT programme, he recognizes himself as having been full of fears and paranoid thinking. He also recognizes himself as having spent much time in using his professional role as a vehicle for his exaggerated pretentiousness, and this made him unlikable. His professional pretensions also made themselves manifest when he spent a period as a director of a school. Fernando was obviously a keen observer of the education system, with an eye for the politics and for the machination of power. This made him a particularly astute witness of the situation in which teachers find themselves. At the time of the interview Fernando had completed the first three levels of the SAT programme.

Irene (Spain). A female philosophy graduate of 34 years, who is beginning her teaching career in Barcelona, Spain, and has embarked on the established route of

serial substitutions of varying lengths which will eventually give her a possibility of gaining a permanent post. She had had previous experience of Gestalt therapy and entered the SAT programme on the recommendation of her therapist, with whom she had shared some of the problems she was having at a particular school. She had taught at a variety of schools and educational environments, notably a college serving a highly marginalized community of Gitanos and Moroccans. At the time of the interview she was awaiting her next substitution having recently completed a period in a primary school. The extension of primary school hours in Spain means that she is more likely to be employed in the primary sector, where she has received no specific training. Cutbacks in philosophy teaching at the secondary level means it is highly unlikely she would ever gain a post teaching her subject. Generally speaking she appears optimistic and happy at the prospect of working in the primary sector. At the time of the interview Irene had participated up to the second module of the SAT programme.

Igor (Mexico). A male teacher of 28 years with a little over 5 years' experience at the time of the interview. Three of these years were previous to his beginning the SAT programme. He teaches maths, physics and computing at an urban preparatory school (equivalent to high school or sixth form) situated in Chiapas, Mexico. As is common at the preparatory level, he came to teaching through his professional training in engineering, and his only pedagogic training was a short induction course. He had subsequently begun a Masters in Education which he did not finish, finding its theoretical orientation did not transfer readily into his practice. At the time of the interview he had completed the first two SAT retreats. He describes his motivation as "curiosity" rather than any personal crisis; he wanted to know a little more about his personality. He gave no indication of having been, or being in any other psychotherapeutic setting. The interview occurred during the third retreat.

Julia (Spain). A 40 year-old female philology professor at a Spanish University. Julia teaches French language and literature and conducts research. Her experience as a post-graduate university student, teacher and researcher is notable for the sense that professionally speaking, and perhaps in her private life too, she is adept at going through the motions and jumping the hoops without any

clear indication that her motivation is self-generated; rather, she gives her career path would appear to be an example of someone on automatic pilot. At the time of the interview she had completed the second module of the SAT programme and was about to enter the third. She had also been involved in Gestalt training and in individual therapy, where she identified her difficulty and confusion in her intimate relationships as being the principal reason for beginning therapy. She entered the SAT programme partly on the recommendation of her therapist.

Juan (Mexico). A middle-aged science and maths teacher with 22 years of service teaching college level students in Chiapas, Mexico. Juan describes his professional life as having been permeated by arrogance and irreverence, and the SAT programme provided him with the cruel shock of comprehending the lack of 'natural' or 'real' dignity as a teacher. In constant activity and seeking hyper-stimulation, José default identity as a teacher could be described as de-centred, he has consistently constructed his experience from the outside-in, and not from the inside-out. A perplexing pattern of behaviour has led him to crisis in his family life, and though he jokes about his reason for attending the SAT, it would seem that this crisis, and the need to understand himself is what brought him to the SAT. At the time of the interview he had completed the SAT programme and was an overtly enthusiastic 'fan'.

Lorena (Spain). A 27 year-old female teacher who was trying out teaching as a possible career. With three years experience in primary education in Spain she is still unsure if the institutional environment is a place she wants to be. Lorena is conspicuously 'progressive' in her aspiration for education and is uncertain as to whether or not her progressive outlook can find their expression, and thus if her aspirational vision of herself as a social change agent can be realized within the education system. On the one hand she sees that teachers have a relatively high degree of autonomy in the classroom. And on the other she sees that the many external pressures (including the worries of parents for their child's success) are constantly undermining this autonomy. At the time of the interview she had just begun the SAT programme.

Muriel (Spain): A teacher by vocation, Muriel, now in her late 40s had been working in Spanish pre-school and primary level education for 26 years at the time of the interview. She sees teaching simultaneously as a vocation and as her refuge from the 'real' world. Whilst she values the role, and the importance of the example of the teacher in the lives of children and adolescents, she is also highly critical of an implicit immaturity in this person who has, effectively, never left school. The interview took place during the fourth module of the SAT programme. Muriel had been involved in various other experiences and processes from in the field of psycho-spirituality and her participation in the SAT programme derived from her vocation as a 'seeker' rather than as a teacher. Her vocation as a seeker is rooted in her awareness of perception of an existential discomfort, of being somehow inadequate.

Minerva (Spain). At 58 years of age, Minerva was very close to retirement at the time of the interview. She had spent 15 years teaching primary education and 22 years teaching maths in Spanish secondary schools, including time spent as a school director. Minerva looks back with fondness on her years of teaching, clearly identifying herself more on the side of the students, and the possibility of relationship, than with the institutional project of education which she portrays as overly intrusive. Minerva becomes emotional and tearful during the interview when she talks about coming to the end of her career. Though she finds her identity as a teacher problematic in many respects, clearly to be without this identity holds a different series of difficulties. At the time of the interview she was participating in the fourth module of the SAT programme.

Nieves (Spain). A 47 year-old female teacher with 18 years of service teaching physical education in secondary schools in Spain. At the time of the interview Nieves was functioning as the director of a newly created school, leading a committed team that had gained a reputation for its innovative approach to education. Nieves' involvement in this new project reflects both her commitment to education and her capacity for leadership. Her continued participation in the SAT programme has come to be synonymous with her commitment to her own personal and professional flourishing and her commitment to be involved in wider efforts at education reform. Interestingly, previous to the interview she had

become actively involved with a group of teachers seeking to reflect on and promote the SAT programme among teachers and with education authorities. Nieves was participating in the fourth and final module of the SAT programme at the time of the interview. She had also participated in training in Gestalt therapy.

Rebeca (Spain). A female Spanish language and literature teacher in her early thirties. Rebeca has a total of roughly 10 years experience in the education system, the first seven occupying positions as a substitute teacher and the last 3 with the benefit of a permanent post and appointed to a secondary school in Barcelona. During her years as a substitute teacher she worked in over thirty state schools. Whilst this was difficult at the time she appreciates that this has given her a greater awareness of the overall picture. She is highly convinced of the virtues of teaching and learning language and literature and describes herself as getting on well with the students whilst at the same time being demanding and rigorous. She had had no experience of psychotherapy before entering the SAT programme.

Reina (Spain). A 42 year-old Linguistics professor at a University in Spain, Reina has 18 years of experience in academia, including as a researcher and a teacher of Spanish to foreign students. Her experience of herself as a professional academic is more closely related to her sense of herself as a dogged and determined worker than as a creative thinker. She is haunted since childhood by her sense of inadequacy and this extends into her professional identity and the feeling of being of unequal intelligence to her more gifted colleagues. At the time of the interview she was participating in the SAT 4. Reina had also been involved with a training in Gestalt therapy and entered the SAT programme on the recommendation of her sister.

Yvete (Mexico). A middle-aged female primary school teacher with 26 years of experience in Mexico. At the time of the interview Yvete was working special education, assigned to attend children with learning difficulties. However, during the interview it becomes apparent that her principal identification as a teacher has been with the teachers' union and with the ongoing struggle with the government over pay and conditions. Her keener self-perception post-SAT has allowed her to discriminate between caring for and bullying her fellow union members. She is the

member of a family in which has seen the participation of representatives of three generations, and she herself is one of four sisters who had participated, three of whom were teachers. At the time of the interview she had completed the SAT programme.

The Interview as a Meeting of Fellow Travellers

Though a brief description of myself and the way that I came to be doing this research was given in Chapter 1, I feel it would be useful here to further develop this profile of myself as the 'other half' of the interview exchange. If a description of each interviewee is important, a description of the common denominator of all the interviews (i.e. myself) is possibly more so. Who were the interviewees meeting when they sat themselves in front of me? Where, if anywhere, was the point of connection that would allow the interview to bear fruit as a positive and creative experience for both? For the research to be a success this contact could not be idiosyncratic – I could not afford to 'click' with one or two interviewees and go through the motions with the rest. To get a body of high quality data I needed to be able to access a language, or achieve a perspective, that was shared across the group. All the interviewees had to be able to see in me something that they could recognize and talk to (or at), and *vice versa*; I had to be able to see in them something I could recognize and question, probe and circumnavigate. With the benefit of hindsight I would say that what this something was was a sense of shared journey. What I saw in them and what they saw in me was someone who had crossed, or was in the process of crossing, the same difficult terrain. It is this meeting that characterized the interviews and gave them their general 'flavour' or 'quality', and generated an atmosphere of trust which permitted me to use my specific knowledge about the trials and tribulations of teaching and about the SAT and the enneagram as I honed in on the particularities of each interviewee.

To draw an obvious parallel, these interviews held much in common with an interview being conducted between two (ex)alcoholics in that they were permeated by a common experience having a potential to generate a 'distilled' knowledge. It is difficult to imagine the interviews as they came about without this common ground. Likewise, it is difficult to imagine them as anything but the

'logical' conclusion of my own journey of (self)discovery; the 'fact' of the interview situation was itself symbolic of the convergence of so many threads in my life up until then. Sitting in front of the interviewee was an interviewer who had been professionally dedicated to education reform, and privately dedicated to self-reform. Someone who had been taking steps toward bringing together their professional experience in the world of teacher training with their personal experience in 'seeking'. Setting up the SAT programme for teachers in Mexico had been a big step for me, but there remained a schism between my work as the director of a centre for educational innovation (involving me in the horrors of management), and my personal interest in the labyrinth of the human 'soul'. At first my work in bringing the SAT programme to teachers in Mexico remained a relatively small part of my responsibilities within the organization. It was a 'pet project' employing one part-time coordinator in an organization that employed over thirty full-time staff for whom I was ultimately responsible. So, renouncing my work in management to take up full-time research focused on the SAT programme represented an important step in taking my own interests more seriously. My sense was that my life up until then had been determined by a series of chances, that things had happened to me, or that my movement through life had more to do with moving away from, rather than moving toward. Applying to study a doctorate focused on the SAT, and organizing a grant for myself, felt like a sea-change in my ability to make a positive choice in a particular direction. I was very much aware of this, and in this sense, the interviews, especially the first ones, were the palpable consummation of my own journey of self-reform, a journey which was taking me from being 'lost' in an accidental job, to 'found' through a passionate interest in something. The very fact of being 'the interviewer' was in some ways a testament to my own transformation, in no small measure catalyzed by my experience as a participant of the SAT programme. I felt myself, therefore to have some understanding of how a professional identity might become radically reframed as a result of the learning of the SAT programme. I had become, not only a person who was interested in the SAT, I had become a person who was able to nurture that interest. This was the narrative that I brought to the table. Though it was hardly ever the explicit subject of conversation, it was, in a positive way, the elephant in the room, making its presence felt without being referred to. This

narrative spiralled around myself as interviewer and extended toward the interviewee as curiosity, at the same time inspiring a belief that what people visibly do, or stop doing, can be indicative of 'invisible' changes that are occurring in the subject's identity, and that the job of the interview was to locate and weave together the visible and invisible of identity as it comes into contact with otherness (including myself in the specific case of the interview situation) and the stories of otherness.

Data Analysis and the Narrative Spiral

The 'discovery' of narrative has [...] as its main benefit, the possibility of opening up new spaces for investigating relations between subjects and structures. The study of narrative is not of cultures of individual subjects, but of their relations. Individuals and collectivities can be seen to be making their own history, but not, as Marx [...] pointed out, in conditions of their own choosing. (Andrews *et al.*, 2000, p.9)

The interviews were essentially treated as narratives, in the sense that they concern temporality and report a before, during and after centred around an event (the SAT programme). Each narrative is a story (transformation of practice), within a story (the transformation of the self), within a story (the collective 'dream' of the SAT programme), within a story (human life). But the narrative turn, or spiral, does not end here. It is also a story of stories arising from, placed within, and read by the narrative voices of other stories, or discourses: the education system, the mystic's tales of the path, psychologies representations of ourselves, and Foucault's historical 'fictions'.³

Viewing the data as narrative in a world of narratives has its problems. The story stands for itself, is enough unto itself, and resonates through its "foreclosure" (Freeman, 2000). And yet it is vulnerable, a tentative voice among others. As Silverman (2006) argues, it is the job of qualitative research's "deep analysis" to leverage narrative's small body by its juxtaposition with theory, with 'objectivised' narrative or discourse, so that one position informs the other and the hybrid story

³ Needless to say, each narrative is also a story within my own story as researcher and 'historicized self', read, 'understood' (or interpreted) and presented through the lens of my own subjectivity and its desire.

can be told as a hyphenated phenomena. The purpose of such analysis can be seen as the transcendence of the local through the elaboration of large stories that speak out:

We live in stories, and do things because of the characters we become in our tales of self. This narrated self which is who I am, is a map. It gives me something to hang on to, a way to get from point A to point B in my daily life. But we need larger narratives, stories that connect us to others, to community, to morality and the moral self. (Denzin, 2000, p.xiii)

With the pervasive relativism of the post-modern world, it is difficult, and perhaps unnecessary, to hunger for 'scientific generalizability' through such new stories forged within the human sciences. Rather, we can, as I do here, aspire to another form of generalizability, that of narrative persuasion. Here, following Foucault, the issue is not truth, but effect. Here Denzin's "larger narrative" can be, in the Foucauldian sense, a technology of self and of power. It can be used upon ourselves and by ourselves, not as Truth, but because it might serve to relocate subjectivity within power and knowledge. This is Denzin's large narrative as ethical discourse, and research as ethics. Its power resides not in objectivity, though it may claim the discourse of objectivity within its rhetoric, but in its persuasiveness, or the persuasiveness of its usability, its effect. Narrative is the point where the individual and the cultural meet, where we see the individual forged by culture, but conversely culture forged by the individual and the local:

[Narrative] is the realm where sociology overlaps with psychology and neither the 'social', the subject matter of traditional sociology, nor the 'individual', the subject matter of conventional psychology, is privileged. Rather both are constructed in relation to each other, not in the 'outer' realm of society and culture, or the 'inner' realm of personality characteristics, but in a distinct, 'psychosocial' zone. (Andrews *et al.* 2000, p.1)

A sensibility to narrative is therefore not only central to accessing the teacher's transforming identity as a psychosocial phenomenon, it is also central in holding the research together around the superficial cohesiveness of lived experience.

Practically speaking this narrative sensibility comprised two moments. The first, at the time of interview, ensures, through appropriate questioning, that there is,

indeed, a story being told that includes 'emplotment' and temporality. The questioning behind this 'emergent narrative' was concerned not only with uncovering or weaving the story, it was also informed by my knowledge of the personality psychology of the enneagram and, as the research progressed, by my understanding of Foucault, especially the interest in relations of power. The second moment, in the reading of transcripts, provides an overview of the change process, a globalized sense of the issues, subsequently used to identify and select the critical moments from any one story. This process of selection had two functions: it attempted to identify the key transformations occurring within each singular narrative, and those common themes across narratives that might have a bearing on the reading of the data through a more theoretical lens.

This second moment of organization went through various evolutions. Firstly, my attention was drawn to the themes of power. Subsequently, the Foucauldian perspective, centred on power, was dropped in favour of the themes of purposes, orders, and performances. These were further analysed through Foucault's fourfold analysis of ethical relations of the self to the self as explored in David Blacker's essay *Intellectual at Work and in Power: Toward a Foucauldian Research Ethic* (1998). Blacker's transposition of Foucault's fourfold analysis of self-relations to the intellectual sphere, to the university teacher/researcher, is achieved by using Foucault's critique of the 'decadent' or universal intellectual, a tradition of thought concerned with 'revealing' universal truths about individual and collective human phenomena. Blacker is concerned to delineate the ethical practice of the intellectual who seeks to leave behind the decadent tradition and to create themselves as 'specific' intellectuals, concerned to delimit their intellectual activities and truth claims and to recognize the historical contingency of knowledge and its necessary relation to power.

Seeing the potential to extrapolate from Blacker's adoption of the fourfold ethical framework for specific "intellectuals at work and in power" to specific *teachers* at work and in power appeared to be a key moment in the research. However, whilst this still holds true conceptually, the use of Foucault's categories of ethical substance, mode of subjugation, ascetic practice and *telos* were subsequently

abandoned as an organizational principle as it resulted in an over-complex double layer of organization – one purely theoretical, the other arising from the data. In the end I returned to a structure for the thesis that is rooted in my initial analysis of data, notably in the identification and organization of critical movements or shifts described by teachers in their narratives. These critical movements or shifts were generally divided into a ‘before’ and ‘after’ (I used to be, or to do such and such, but now I am more like, or have begun to do, so and so). The value of the SAT experience for teachers is thus being determined in relation to the patterns in these changes that can be identified, patterns that can be read in some cases as revealing a shift in teacher identity and agency in certain common directions, and in other cases demonstrates an idiosyncratic component to the way in which teachers respond to the knowledge and experience of the SAT programme.

At the eleventh hour of assembling the thesis, a return to the data as the organizational principle involved considerable re-writing and much soul searching, but I concluded that the advantage of greater clarity would outweigh the disadvantages in terms of time and effort. What resulted is an analysis of data around three central issues or questions that circulated implicitly within the narratives: the purposes of teaching, the order(ing) of teaching, and the performance(s) of teaching. Purpose, order and performance were the terms I chose to capture three broad nodes of experience surfacing within the narratives. Whilst these terms can be understood in reference to the more classic terminology of philosophy, structure, and agency, I have not used these terms because the data that they encompass is more chaotic and far reaching than the use of these standard terms would imply. ‘Purpose’ includes more than a vision of what education should be like, as we find in the narratives important information as to the ‘whys’ and ‘wherefores’ of how these teachers became teachers, that is to say their understanding of their motivations. Likewise, ‘order’ is more than the operation of different systems and practices of control, it also captures teachers’ relations to education’s obligation to knowledge and the ordering of students through diverse mechanisms of examination. ‘Performance’, also, is more than the evidence of the shifts in the way teachers exert their agency within the dominant structure and its philosophy, it is also the ‘performance’ of their identity as a

deliberate or unconscious elaboration, the performance of a teacher's mask, and how this particularly psychological agency may have evolved as a result of the SAT experience. Needless to say, if these three categories for the analysis of data were rooted in the data, it is unlikely that I would have arrived at this reading had I not previously been deeply immersed in a more theoretical position; the data came into relief through the light and shadows of my theoretical meanderings.

Ethical Considerations

Two principal ethical concerns exist around this study: reliability and confidentiality.

The question of the reliability of the data gathered can be further divided into various components, some of which, such as the psycho-social manipulations inherent to the interview setting, have been touched on already and can be said to be more technical. These more technical concerns relate to the question of how we can ensure the interview process is as 'clean' as possible research (see above, *Hearing is Believing?* and *Data Analysis and the Narrative Spiral*). Other factors that impact on reliability, however, can be located closer to the ethical axis. Notable amongst these is my own involvement in the 'case' being studied. As I have previously described (see *Chapter 1. - The Story Behind the Story*), I came to be doing *this* research on *this* case (i.e. the SAT programme) because of my direct involvement in it. Clearly then, my starting point is clearly not impartial. This is perhaps not overly problematic if the research were descriptive in nature. However, this case study has is essentially evaluative, and, moreover, the evaluation it proposes is not "formative" (i.e. seeking evidence on how to improve the SAT programme); rather, it is "summative" (Robson, 2002, p. 208), and seeks to establish the effects and effectiveness (i.e. the value) of the SAT as a training for teachers. Thus, the study is outward looking, not self-referential, and as such must be able to claim some degree of objectivity. That is to say, it needs to convince the reader that my 'bias' as a researcher internal to the case, is more than offset and compensated for by my ethical propriety.

Given my involvement, obvious questions arise around the possibility of over-directive questioning (i.e. fishing for suitable answers), and an unrepresentative

use of the data (i.e. choosing the good bits from the transcripts and 'losing' the negatives). To some degree these concerns can be addressed simply by including the transcripts as 'proof' of good practice. And yet to include all of the transcripts would swell the study to enormous proportions, and is therefore unfeasible. However, I have included a representative sample of one of the shorter interviews, conducted with Reina in Spain (see Appendix 3.), and this should give some idea of how the interview was conducted and how the transcript became data within the body of the thesis.

The question of bias and manipulation of data does not end here, however, as the respondents are also invested in the programme, especially those who have completed the last modules. This raises the possibility of them saying what they say, and how they say it, because they want to be convinced of its success. The possibility that the interviewees might be 'gilding the lily' is compounded by the nature of their relationship with myself, someone they clearly identify as being involved in the organization of the programme. Might these teachers just be telling a good story, and telling it *to me*, the one they know *really* wants to hear a good story? Could they, consciously or unconsciously, be feeling compelled to please? What has been the effect, if any, of the power I might exert over them in my position as researcher, and as a man interviewing a sample primarily composed of women? In what way would the data have changed if the interviewer had been a woman?

Following on from such questions, and still within the theme of reliability, we might ask if these narratives are truly representative of the larger group of SAT participants, of those that didn't volunteer to be interviewed, and of those that dropped out of the SAT programme after the first or second module (the programme's drop out rate is relatively high). There is a point, here, at which to answer yes or no becomes almost impossible within the confines of the present study and its limited resources. Measures could have been taken to ascertain the accuracy or truthfulness of the data (for example: obtaining corroboratory evidence from colleagues and students; using a third party, uninvolved, interviewer; or the subsequent avowal and/or correction of transcripts by interviewees). However, such doubts and their associated measures follow,

perhaps, a law of diminishing returns. It is unlikely, for example, that an 'independent', 'objective' interviewer would have elicited the highly focused information that I was able to 'access' because of my knowledge of the process. There comes a point at which, I believe, it is necessary to suspend *disbelief* and turn to the 'persuasiveness' of the events. Have these teachers recounted real things occurring in their practice, things that ring true, things that are surprising and not necessarily formulaic (and therefore manipulable as false responses)? And are they, independently, reporting things that coincide? It is precisely, perhaps, in the turn to data analysis that much of the ethical concerns around reliability can be addressed. My intention here was not so much to focus on one persons (easily manipulable) responses, but rather to seek out trends across the respondents that could be exemplified by particular testimonies.

The second broad area of ethical concern is consent and confidentiality, as the experiences and opinions expressed by teachers were expected to be of a sensitive nature. For this reason the teachers interviewed were asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix 4.), which explained how their interview material would be used as part of a doctoral thesis and made available to others. Different degrees of consent were available to participants in the signing of the form, which was done after the interview so that each participant could weigh their degree of consent in the light of what they and 'revealed' in the interview. The options available to them were to:

- Authorize the use of my interview in the terms specified, and with the use of my name.
- Authorize the use of my interview in the terms specified in anonymity.
- Require the interview information to remain completely confidential.

In the event all participants gave the fullest degree of consent permitting the use of their real names to appear next to any material cited. Originally, this had been deemed desirable as it was in keeping with the *ethos* of the SAT and of the research. However, subsequently the decision has been taken to change all of the names of participants, thus assuring their anonymity. This has been done to avoid any complications in the future and, especially to conform to any more exacting ethical considerations in any possible future publications.

Limits and Possibilities

This research does not generate new theory; rather it brings into contact theories and practices from apparently divergent fields and sources. It does this by creating a meta-narrative, perhaps best described as psychosocial, from the empirical material of teachers' professional narratives. This meta-narrative is not put forward as scientifically generalizable, however, it claims validity to the degree that it is able to persuade the reader through the plausibility of the picture that emerges from the different empirical voices and their juxtaposition with theoretical voices. By documenting and subjecting the narratives of teachers involved in 'deep identity work' to a Foucauldian informed analysis, the research professes to draw out how teachers' self-knowledge and resultant psycho-ethical work upon themselves can be seen to play out politically in the vision and practice of their 'discipline'. In doing so, it is hoped to provide some basis of evaluating the real-life relevance of the ethical turn, summarized as the knowledge and care of the self, as an 'answer' to the problematizations of teacher identity. In this way the research positions the SAT programme within contemporary debate around subjectivity, teacher identity, teacher well-being and professional ethics, teacher education and practical training.

Section 2:

Questions of Purpose

The ‘purpose’ of the title refers to the function, role and ethical underpinnings not only of education and schooling, but also, more specifically, to parallel issues in the professional lives of teachers. How is it that teachers come to be teaching? What forces, desires and needs carried them to the classroom door and beyond? There is no attempt at an exhaustive account of a philosophy of education, and only a few angles will be explored in as much as they complement the general direction of the discussion and positions surfacing in the teachers’ narratives. Three themes are developed: Chapter 4, *Making Knowledge Count?*, examines narrative evidence and some complementary theoretical perspectives around the field of knowledge; Chapter 5, *Dropping Out or Tuning In?*, explores personal and professional motivations; and Chapter 6, *Keeping the Faith?*, explores the question of how faith in education is both lost and maintained by teachers. Each of these themes presents a loose ‘before’ and ‘after’ organizing principle, the former involving expressions from the default position of the teachers prior to participating in the SAT, and a ‘revisited’ section presenting movements and transformations occurring as a result of the SAT experience.⁴ In general, the use of the “revisited” motif here is similar to the psychoanalytic definition of learning and development as “new editions of old conflicts” (Britzman, 1998, p.29). Finally, Chapter 7, *Discussion and Conclusions*, presents a development of the theoretico-empirical findings of the three previous chapters as a means of arriving at a general perspective of the significance of the evidence from the narratives within the discourses of educational purpose.

⁴ An exception is Cecilia’s tale in *Dropping Out and Tuning In*, which is an example of a transformational process over the course of her career and includes transformations occurring prior to participation in the SAT.

Chapter 4. Making Knowledge Count?

Anna Freud describes early education as

[...] a kind of “guerrilla war” between educator and child. Education wants to substitute for love of dirt a disgust of dirt, for shamelessness a feeling of shame, for cruelty sympathy, and in place of a rage for destructiveness a desire to cherish things [...] Step by step education aims at the exact opposite of the child’s instinctive desires. (1931, p.55)

There is evidence that some teachers in the study were aware of this oppression of children, and of their central role in its implementation. Dora⁵, reflecting on her life experience, had awoken to the possibility that education involves the systematic oppression of the child’s interests and spirit: “I liked to play, I liked to eat, and I liked to sleep. I liked three things; I didn’t like for them to tell me ‘go on and do your work’; that was my martyrdom!”. We may not agree with reducing a child’s interests to play, food and sleep, yet Dora’s account captures the painful realization that her childhood had been ‘stolen’ from her, the awareness that her early accommodations had set her on the path to becoming the obsessively correct person she now found intolerable. An intolerable correctness she inflicted on her own pre-school students in a regimental campaign of teaching and learning:

And then the children would say to me ‘Teacher, the crayons weren’t here yesterday’, [and I’d tell them] ‘Well, that’s where they’re going to be now!’. But I was really something, moving things around ... This thing about having everything so organized, everything so nice, everything without so much as a speck of dirt, [everything] just so ... well, so not a school. (Dora)

Narrative evidence suggests Anna Freud’s “guerrilla war” extends right through to secondary education. If teaching is difficult, it is perhaps most difficult because the teacher is the visible and exposed foot soldier of a fundamental clash of values, arbitrator of a “permanent provocation” (Foucault, 2000d) between the potential for order and work, and the potential for play and spontaneity. To continue with Anna Freud’s analysis, if play and spontaneity are to be expunged in the meeting of

⁵ Dora is one of the Spanish interviewees. See p. 35 for brief description.

generations, this is done in the name of knowledge and civilization represented and embodied by teachers themselves. An illustration of this is found in the testimony of Rebeca's⁶ valuation of learning; she is "grateful to have been taught language, literature, maths, physics, natural sciences, and everything" and feels she has personally invested in students' academic achievement. Having been "rational and cold" in her evaluation of student progress, her concern was to measure proven accumulation of knowledge. Her penchant for Cervantes and attempts to convince students of his value can be understood as more than an accident and clash of tastes: "I arrived in the class," she says, "thinking Cervantes, Cervantes, Cervantes," and faced students who "didn't give a damn about Cervantes". Her preference is pre-loaded with the causes and effects of power, and the dissonance between 'high' culture and the 'popular' interests of the young. An implied imposition of Cervantes is symptomatic of the attempt to mould the next generation 'in the image of the present'. Writing in the first half of the 20th Century, Anna Freud identified a corrective principle behind all education:

The universal aim of education is always to make out of the child a grown-up person who shall not be very different from the grown-up world around him [*sic*] [...] education struggles with the nature of the child or – as the grown-up usually calls it – with his naughtiness [or rebelliousness in the case of the adolescent] (1931, p.19: see also Bernstein's notion of 'regulative discourse', 2000).

It would be wrong to infer the operation of an oppressive principle in Rebeca; rather, Rebeca *believes* in an education capable of communicating value and values. She *believes* in Cervantes as beneficial, necessary, individually and collectively. If teaching requires exerting control over the territory, discipline was not her primary objective. Rebeca 'knows' what 'ought' to be handed down, but cannot guarantee that it will be received. She has felt the "weight of responsibility" of this transmission, not as something external to her; rather, she experiences it as something close to her own heart. Rebeca's own discourse is a mirror of the official discourse, and *vice versa*. She has learnt "to look for the ideal in knowledge" ("and I demand it of those poor [children]").

⁶ Rebeca is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

Rebeca strives to 'teach' Cervantes, making demands on her students that she considers proportional to her efforts: "I used to think 'OK, I do a lot of preparation for classes, I put in a lot of interest, a lot of effort . . . And *you* [students] haven't taken in enough, you haven't taken in *enough*, you haven't made the grade"". We might speculate that there exists a manifestation of an "economic" discourse hidden in Rebeca's commodification of knowledge. Take, for example, her following comment:

[...] up until now it appears that our work has consisted only in putting out contents and then gathering them back in again. And when they returned them to you, well you felt frustrated. They've cheated me! I've given them so much, and they only give me half back [laughter]. (Rebeca)

Tamara Bibby (2011, p.37), in her psychoanalytically informed research on the relational dynamics of the modern classroom, documents a telling conversation between a researcher and two year 6 primary school children. Asked by the researcher why they thought their teachers got so stressed, the following exchange occurs:

Minnie: Because they want it to be perfect.

Rani: Yes, it all has to be perfect.

Minnie: They think we are perfect children, but we are not. We are just children.

Rani: Yeah, every child ain't perfect. There is always something...

Minnie: [interrupts] Wrong with them.

Rani: Not wrong with them. But they ask that we all be perfect.

'Perfection' is the price these children feel themselves expected to pay for the privilege of education, and the satisfaction of their 'hungry' teachers.⁷ Other evidence from the narratives points to a new slant on the 'knowledge economy'. Take Carla's⁸ more explicit statement about her own grading: "you owe me this, you owe me that, almost charging them. No? Not that they owed me money, but

⁷ Yet we should not forget that these same teachers are also subject to demands for perfection through the mastery of competences and the achievement of their students. Even Bibby's reading of the voices of students contains within it a criticism of the teachers at the centre of these relationally fraught classrooms. Bibby implies the teachers do not display the required amount of sensitivity to the children and her research pointedly reveals their weaknesses

⁸ Carla is one of the Mexican interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

they owe me pieces, they owed me work. Come on, hurry up!". Similar sentiments appear in Nieves⁹ description of the teacher-learner 'contract': "I sometimes see myself offering them possibilities so that they can take them, but *all* of them!" She describes an ongoing, almost comical, conflict with her physical education students around showering, which to her represents the completion of a virtuous cycle of warm-up, activity, wash-down. Nieves meets the students' resistance with a variety of counter-attacks, from cajoling, to insisting, to including the shower in her grading criteria. Whilst students may accept a trade-off between grade and showering, she herself feels what almost appears to be a physical pain about the asymmetry of the 'showerless session'.

It's hard, hard, hard. It is like renouncing something that for me is like ... you have to do the whole the class, and the whole class is warm up, so and so, and SHOWER. [...] And so its hard to give it up [...] and] I keep getting wrapped up in "oh no, they need to shower, they need to shower!" Then they go and say, "Oh, they didn't shower, and they left like that". And I'm going to feel bad, no? I'm going to say "Oh no! They are making a fool of me", no? Obviously, there is a contradiction here. From here, against whom do I turn? (Nieves)

Buried in this, perhaps, is an uncomfortable truth, a tendency for teachers to feel they must control the environment and make teaching and learning a total exchange of raw materials and products.

Whilst Nieves' relationship with herself and with her students becomes problematized around this idiosyncratic conflict in the shower room, her dilemma and its ramifications might be seen as representative of an education increasingly concerned to micro-manage the 'total experience'. Nieves' pedagogic gaze extends into student hygiene and beyond into an attempt to 'normalize' the shared experience of nudity, and to facilitate a mutual confession of teenage bodies which many students resist with creative resolve. This particular 'showering' appears to be in danger of becoming a competence, and demonstrates that schools' obligation to knowledge is about much more than Cervantes. Nudity is to be mastered, tamed, in an addendum of the physical education curriculum, itself an addendum, a soft underbelly, of the 'hard' curriculum. We must learn to get on together, even amid

⁹ Nieves is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

the (unspoken) anxieties of teenage nudity. No doubt Nieves' ends are laudable; she is attempting to provide some curative experience by which the learning of 'shame' and/or awkwardness is replaced by acceptance and naturalness. She is not alone in her concern for a cure. As Britzman makes clear, in the confidence of its 'youth', psychoanalysis' original move toward education was curative; it posed the promise of a compensation and offered 'advice' to educators:

How can education recognize and repair the harm done not just by others but the harm that occurs under the name of education? [...] Freud offers a balance as precarious as his metaphor [...] "Education has to find its way between the Scylla of non-interference and the Charybdis of frustration". (Britzman, 1998, p.9)

Non-interference and frustration criss-cross Nieves' shower room in bewildering complexity as she attempts to 'repair' her students' learning about nakedness. But this complexity is rendered yet more nuanced once we acknowledge that Nieves' curative intention cannot be isolated from its broader context; in a culture in which learning might be described as sterilized – i.e. unambiguous in its desirability and measurability - how can Nieves convince her students that the highly conflicted experience of nudity, its imposing multiplicities, qualifies as 'education'? How can she hope to persuade them that such confusions are for their own good and will, in some way, prepare them for the world? How will she convince them that this is not one invasion too many, the point where compliance must become resistance if they are to protect themselves from the anxiety of over-exposure? Does her curative intention take on accidental dimensions, becoming an interference of interference? During the interview Nieves' uncertainties surface around her insistence on the holy trinity of 'warm-up, activity, shower-down'. She confronts the difficult knowledge of the obligation she attempts to impose on her students, and is at some point of transition in her perception of her own practice. Perhaps in the 'confession' of her students' opposition a definitive transformation around her obligation to knowledge is taking shape.

Of all the narratives, Nieves' depiction of this conflict around nudity is the most poignant in that it speaks of something lost to education (naturalness), that education attempts to reclaim, losing itself in the process. Siegfried Bernfeld writes that,

No theory of education can resolve the antimony between the justified will of the child and the justified will of the teacher; on the contrary, education consists of this antimony. (1973, p.xxvii)

In Nieves' case her practice would seem about to resolve itself in her own "Charybdis of frustration". But to allow this to happen is itself a transformation of the pedagogic relationship, a ceding of ground to the timidity of her teenage students.

Making Knowledge Count: Revisited

Nieves' testimony suggests that her transformation is still nascent, her growing awareness may or may not manifest as a change in practice. However, the participants' narratives in general are replete with changes already in motion. A conspicuous expression of transformation occurring in Cecilia's¹⁰ practice is in the area of content; silence (and stillness) has begun to enter her classroom *as a value in itself*.

I believe that what they like to feel to feel is that they become calmer. It is a sensation that they don't normally have in their lives. [...] I don't think that they would verbalize it like this, but I can see it, [in] how they me ask for it [immediately]. One girl student once told me, when I met her in the street, that she had had a conflict with a friend who had a dog who almost bit her and so on, and she said to me? I remembered your spiral and I began to breath. (Cecilia)

The meditative spiral Cecilia uses at the beginning of her class does not generate the productive silent stillness that permits other things to be done, such as 'silent reading'; rather, it evokes the silent stillness that refers to itself. In a hyper-active school, driven by curriculum amid a fervour of communications, silent stillness interrupts the turbulent surface of school life. As Cecilia says, "it is extremely rare to see a student being still, they are all with their chairs and with their hands ... there is always hyperactivity". Influenced by experience in meditation, Cecilia introduces this exercise at the beginning of her class as an approximation to meditation, yet draws back from labelling it meditation; rather, she introduces it to

¹⁰ Cecilia is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

her students as an exercise to clear the mind and aid mathematical thinking. Whilst she takes the register the class is invited to concentrate on a spiral drawn on the blackboard, and to remain still, silent and aware of their breathing. Students who were able to maintain this state throughout the register call get points added to their grade.

Simple! But underneath this conventional reward mechanism other more complex shifts are occurring. Cecilia reports that students' initial enthusiasm for this strange exercise was dependent on the reward, but that this was soon replaced by an enthusiasm for the sensation of stopping ("I think they loved that thing of stopping"). Silence and stillness are given a *therapeutic value* by Cecilia. Her experience of invoking their presence in the classroom leads her to conclude that:

Of course, beginning the class with everyone in silence for five minutes can't compare with a class where one person is shouting, another throwing paper, another grabbing a classmate by the neck, and someone right at the back kicking the door. (Cecilia)

Cecilia's new practice could be reduced to behavioural control, a means of assuring better student performance, but surely there are more interesting and valuable perspectives that can be applied to silent stillness. Blake *et al.* (2000) in their essay *Solitude, Silence, Listening* propose the value of these practices as a positive and necessary response to our over-communicative cultural style and the explosion of 'messages' made possible by new technology. They propose a number of purposes for silence centred around better communication and a "non-polemical cultural style" (Corriada Fiumara, quoted in Blake *et al.*, 2000, p.150). Whilst these principles are important, silent stillness is more than cultivation of a stage for significant communication. The practice contains its own activity, as students are forced back into their own minds, their own thoughts, as if in a sanctioned daydream. Without interference they are able to follow the uninterrupted 'free' flow of thought, perceptions and sensations. For a brief instance their own mind is the 'curriculum'.

Cecilia asserts that part of the activity's appeal is that it contains no great mystery. Indeed, we are a long way here from the elaborate lesson plans of the competence discourse (Moore, 2004). However, other teachers in the study have also

attempted similar activities, without the same success. The simplicity of the exercise and its unassuming worldly pretensions are inversely proportional to the difficulty of achieving the goal: in attempting to experience nothing one must do nothing, and we soon find ourselves incapable of doing nothing.

Unsurprisingly, Cecilia is interested in what the students discover during the exercise. But with what authority does she invite her hyperactive students to stare at a spiral? We would expect them to find nothing that draws them in and maintains their interest. So why might students like it? A clue to their surprising engagement might be found in Naranjo's identification of the shift occurring between the conditions of "not finding anything" and "finding nothing" (Naranjo, 2004, p.285). According to Naranjo, spiritual tradition teaches that *finding* nothing is an encounter with the presence of Being, an encounter we thirst after and erroneously seek in doing and having. Applying oneself to the search for nothing, the action of no-action, involves a pedagogy that is diametrically opposed to the direction of learning in schools involving the accumulation of knowledge and skills. The difficult knowledge of meditation, on the other hand, is approached by the constant return to the beginning, which is the same as the end, and can be generalized as a 'letting go'. The Zen tradition describes this return to ground zero as "beginner's mind", the development or cultivation of the attitude of the novice (Suzuki, 1973). Tea ceremonies and such repetitious practices stress not so much the nature of the act, but the attitude in which it done, the *quality of the doer*. It is attention to the action, regardless of its apparent worth or its possible outcome, which makes the event 'true' or a thing of beauty, and denotes the quality of the doer. As in art, the perfect act is inseparable from the perfect state of mind.

Though references to Yoga and Zen might appear to be a digression, they draw attention to the existence of philosophies and practices of learning radically different from the dominant paradigm of Western(ized) schooling. In the light of such perspectives we can read into Cecilia's experiment a fundamental, if momentary, inversion in the direction of travel, the eruption of an 'alien' discourse within a dominant educational paradigm whose roots Foucault described as "the most insipid psychology, and the most antiquated humanism" (Foucault in Miller, 1994, p.172). Though she does not say so, one might suspect that Cecilia, who had

recently completed a specialized course in meditation, has begun to discover the possibility of an alternative humanism and psychology. Perhaps, like Foucault, she has seen that:

Behind the visible façade of the system, one posits the rich uncertainty of disorder, and beneath the thin surface of discourse, the whole mass of a largely silent development: a 'presystematic' that is not of the order of the system; a 'prediscursive' that belongs to an essential silence. (Foucault, 1969, p.76)

Could it be that these new perceptions, not yet formulated discursively, generate the courage needed to share the knowledge of silence with her students? If so, it is an invitation that the students have responded to with apparent zeal. Can we presume that this success derives from a pedagogy of "contagion" as underlined by Naranjo? It assumes that

[...] *experience may be passed on*, and that, as life proceeds from life, a certain depth of experience may perhaps be only brought about by the presence of another being partaking in that depth, and not by manipulations. If attitude is a deeper issue than technique, and if technique issues from attitudes, experience is still a deeper issue than attitudes and constitutes *their* source. (2000, p.16, emphasis in original)

The *experience* of contagion as a communication of experience, is touched upon by another teacher, Reina¹¹. It is something that she has benefited from as student or learned, but perhaps has not known how to value. It is precisely in the context of a meditation exercise that she begins, following a session at the SAT, to reflect on the importance of contagion in her own academic life:

This morning, when Claudio was talking about contagion in meditation, I think that there is also a contagiousness in the teaching-learning process. There is contagion there, because for me, after my degree what I learnt most from my teacher was through contagion. It was like you are a disciple [...] But if you ask me what they taught me, if he ever gave me a class in linguistics, no, never. I learnt by being at their side [...] so it wasn't about theory. (Reina)

Contagion as pedagogy stands in stark contrast to the manipulations and deliberations of the competence discourse for good teaching. This discourse, with

¹¹ Reina is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

its profiles (lists) of standards and competences, is, according to Moore, underpinned by a

[...] belief that teachers do need to have sufficient subject knowledge to teach their students effectively, that they do need to be effective planners and classroom managers, and that a high level of personal organisation and preparedness is one of the principal requirements of good classroom teaching. (2004, p. 79)

Though, in contrast, the principle/practice of contagion approximates to what Moore describes as a charismatic discourse (2004), we can, I think, assume that indefinable 'charisma' is not what permits Cecilia to engage her students; rather, it is her own hard-won knowledge of silence. It seems more probable that it is not Cecilia's force of character that is carrying her students towards an experience of silence, but the weight of her own experience, the courage of her own conviction (knowledge). Have Cecilia's students also begun to partake of her own deepening experience of the difficult knowledge that is *finding* nothing? Have they caught something from her? And does this something include rewards that are greater than the remedial reward of an absence of agitation? Has it soon become more to them than an anti-stress therapy, but rather a door to some other "presystematic" place that is experienced as unfamiliar, yet pleasantly vital?

Cecilia's practice of silence is conspicuously teacherly; it is something that she 'invites' her students to partake in. But the participants' narratives reveal silent developments of another order. Conrado¹², for example, is developing a new pedagogical space for himself in which silence is imminent. This new space takes shape around the sense of his own, unadorned human presence and his ability to sense this presence in others:

I can arrive in class, look at them in a loving way, with affection, giving time to each person, the moment of fame for you, for you, for you. If it is in the morning, then a pat on the back [...] and so from this starting point the English classes have been going through *big small* changes [...] everyone has their own vital space and has their moment. So I feel like I am at a moment in which I am applying tools such as these I have mentioned: the greeting, the goodbye, and the silence. The silence has been really enjoyable for me. (Conrado)

¹² Conrado is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

Are we to believe that an attention to saying hello and goodbye might represent an important professional development for teachers? Where does the bigness of Conrado's small changes lie? Could it be in the creation of *relational* space in which teaching and learning might occur? Bibby's study of classroom interaction in an English primary school supports the idea that Conrado's 'simple' activities of student recognition are unusual:

Our field notes recorded very few examples of children giving evidence of feeling seen, valued and acknowledged [...] In Grafton School, it was remarkably rare for a teacher to give an individual specific positive feedback, and when it happened it tended to take place in complex circumstances that might have muddled the message. (Bibby, 2011, p.38)

Bibby's psycho-emotional focus reveals a classroom in which the students' craving for attention and relationship with the teacher is manipulated and muddled through the obligation to knowledge. Bibby's documentation shows that students' often desperate desire for recognition (relationship) can become uncomfortably entwined with answering questions, and more uncomfortably so when these answers are incorrect. The complex circumstances she refers to appear to be those of teaching and learning itself. Conrado, on the other hand, seems to dedicate time to the child's need for attention as a "starting point".

If Conrado is attending to the relational space directly, albeit briefly, as a "starting point", there is narrative evidence to indicate that he is most concerned with fully establishing his position within this relational space:

I allow myself not to go so directly into an activity [...] [I always used to] be in accelerated movement, and now I can spend five minutes observing, watching, sensing myself a little, getting into contact with my body, which is difficult for me, but that is where I am. No? And it gives me a little wisdom, a little margin. (Conrado)

Conrado's *presence* in the classroom and his ability to engage with his students' *presence* could develop simultaneously and be interdependent. However, a developing sense of self is what allows to him to occupy teaching with more vitality. It is a self more fully conscious of its own body, its own affect, and not so enslaved to the intellect. He owes this liberation from excessive thinking to an experience in a drama exercise:

I realised that there was something very powerful [in my performance], yes! And that there are connections that sometimes, often, I used to forget, or [still] forget. And if I am connected a little more, which is difficult for me, but if I do connect a little more, with my body, my feelings, my emotions, *this* [pointing to his head] works less, or I allow it to work less, or it has less voice, or I silence it, and so things become a little easier. Not only easier, but also things can give me pleasure, a situation can give pleasure that before would have been very stressful, tense. No? And so I realize that I am on the right path. (Conrado)

The moment that Conrado described did not actually take place in the SAT, but it is the type of experience that occurs in the theatrical work undertaken in the SAT programme. Once more, we are a long way from the difficult knowledge of the competence discourse. A long way from the commonplace that a teacher must *think and analyse* their way into good teaching. For Conrado, getting connected means learning to turn down the volume of his overactive mentality and turn up his emotional and physical registers. He struggles to get connected, not with a set of teaching skills or activities, but with his own experience of himself. In this sense Conrado's narrative implies that there is something to (re)learn that is prior to techno-rational competence, something in which techno-rational competence may take root and become properly situated.

Drawing on Conrado's account we might conclude that this 'something' is *wholeness*, a connection to the messages of his own multiplicity, forming a new pedagogic space from which to teach. As the relation to himself increases, so do his relations to the multiplicity of the group. This wholeness is one of the values underlined in Naranjo's (2000) Gestaltian framework, where it is coupled to the difficult knowledge of responsibility. We must be responsible for expanding our knowledge of ourselves, thus becoming consciously whole, just as being conscious of what is occurring makes the evasion of responsibility more difficult. To take full responsibility for the learning of his theatrical 'performance' Conrado needs to apply this learning across his whole mode of being, including teaching, acquiring a fuller, rounder, stage presence. Not that he is *acting*; rather, he is learning *to act differently*. His employment of silence is more than just a prop, it is the medium through which and by which contact can occur. What is silenced and cleared from stage, even if briefly, is not just the noise of his own techno-rational bias, it is the

noise of the curriculum. As with Cecilia, where silence occurs the curriculum is in abeyance. What is more, silencing the curriculum allows Conrado to sense the pedagogic relationship in its nakedness, to (re)discover the emotional physicality of teaching, this fact of sharing a temporal, spatial and spiritual domain with these newly embodied souls.

Conrado, an English teacher, who describes himself as having been “a normal teacher” - dependent, rigid, insecure - is interested in the power of *doing* things differently and giving *character* to his actions. He details lessons in which he has taken his surprised students on expansive pedagogic journeys:

The students didn't recognize me! And, well, it's been wonderful to allow myself to do things [differently]; go out into the school patio and greet each other by the hand, and in pairs. Today is Mothers' Day and of the 13 Grandmothers of the Earth, but all this is in English with 5th and 6th grade [of primary school ...] The kids proposing ideas for what these Grandmothers would want for our planet, and with our water. Each pair gave you an idea. Now go to the fountain, and wet your hands [...] “That was brilliant Conrado! Obviously, because I can see you, perceive you, I don't know what, you seem closer”. For me a wonderful comment from a kid was “That class was brilliant!” I mean my classes [used to be] normal, and so when they say something like that, it's great. (Conrado)

Conrado senses that this unfolding practice is not made possible by the addition of some new personal faculty, but rather from the removal of the interferences that were inhibiting their expression in the first place. He describes himself as having been in “stand by” for most of his career, sitting anxiously atop an untapped potential. Teaching, he says, is now “hooking [him] into life.” Echoing Nietzsche, we might say that he is becoming “vital” whereas previously he had been “decadent”. Conrado, without appearing vain, would seem to be conscious of what Friedrich Nietzsche might have called a growing “nobility” rooted in the heroism of an *amor fati* (Blake *et al.*, 2000, p.124): that love of things as they are, the love of his teaching life and its tragicomic stage.

Chapter 5: Dropping Out or Tuning In?

Conrado, post-SAT, is learning to occupy his role with greater gusto, to step forward into his own skin (see chapter 4), but narrative evidence reveals the primary movement underlying many teaching identities has involved a recoil from the world. The world as an inhospitable and hostile place is a recurrent theme in the descriptions of their teaching origins, and clearly a 'negative' motivation for becoming a teacher. Araceli¹³, for example, felt she had been born on the wrong planet. For Araceli, teaching represented at once the opportunity of a retreat from the world, and a battleground for her attempt to transform the world in her own image. Her frontal attacks on what she saw as the tedium and stupidity of professional dialogue in schools came to nothing, and once it was clear her defensive citadel was not amenable to demands for a new way of being and doing, she entered into depression.

There was a point at which I fell out completely with my profession because I felt that when I was in the staff team everything was totally neurotic. For me it was unacceptable. There were things that were obvious that we tried to transmit to the students through the school's project. But then between the teachers the envies were brutal. And so for me that was so chaotic that I could not tolerate it. [...] Perhaps I thought that by becoming a teacher I could change the world, and I realized that that was not possible. And that was when I entered into depression. (Araceli)

Muriel¹⁴ traces her motivation to become a teacher to feeling incapable of taking up a place in the world of adults. Children were the easier option. She sees this as a generalized condition among teachers and one of the great problems of education. She describes school as a "refuge for those who do not dare to do something else". "You use the child," she says, "and [this teacher] is really the person least suitable to work with children ... that is how I felt, there was something inside me that hurt and I didn't know how to do anything else." She portrays schools as peopled by

¹³ Araceli is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

¹⁴ Muriel is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

marginalized adults, often incapable of operating effectively even in the relations between colleagues. For example, Muriel's academic leadership within a school foundered in difficulties expressing and arguing her ideas for change among colleagues. Such individual and collective inadequacy is a long way from the professional, political and ideological imaginary of the teacher as 'exemplary adult'. Muriel's teachers are conspicuous for their immaturity. "What you cannot do," she says "is manage yourself with a group of grown ups".

Whilst Muriel's experience is plagued by insecurities, Fernando¹⁵ appears more robust: "[the school] is my world, and in my world I am King". Fernando dominated school through intellectual prowess and hard work. But this contrasts with difficulties in other environments, including continuing fears and paranoia on the street. In comparison, school is a safe place, a refuge: "I always gained recognition at school, was applauded, I was a grade A student". This schism between an uncertain 'real' world and the known, controlled "refuge" of school led Fernando, and others, to increasingly dedicate their energies to professional life. Fernando declares he "lived to work", and this dedication further separated him from his own life.

Reina, also, describes work as the "motor" of her life. "An ugly girl, a clumsy girl, the girl with braces, the girl with glasses" and competing with an attractive and clever sister, Reina sees that from an early age she came to identify hard work and success with a basic "right to exist". Her life was a long struggle to gain acceptance in the world. There are echoes here of Bernfeld's depiction of human destiny since the Fall, whereby "man is forced to create a substitute paradise of his own by sweat, renunciation and the sense of guilt" (1973, p.55). With so much hanging on her working identity, Reina was never able to verbalize the fact that she does not actually like linguistics (her academic discipline at the university). Her interview proved to be watershed in this respect.

Araceli, Muriel, Fernando, and Reina provide examples of the strange phenomenon in which people wary of taking up the challenge of the 'outside world' have become the teachers who, supposedly (and ironically), prepare others to take up that

¹⁵ Fernando is one of the Mexican interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

challenge. Is this paradox ontological to the identity of all education professionals, especially those dedicating their entire professional careers to educational institutions?

The school, I say, is just like a family. There is the father with the handsome title of principal who commands and punishes, who is kind to those who behave themselves but remains above all remote and overpowering. There is the mother, the woman teacher, friendly, close, loving, yet moody, and in fear of the principal. She too can be won over, and more demonstratively so, by anyone who is a good boy. Finally, there are the child's schoolfellows, brothers and sisters, and equals by all law and custom. Still, free competition prevails and anyone who is able – in learning, cheating, flattery – or who is full of energy can get to the top of the class and first place in teacher's heart. The educational content and mission of this institution consists in making bookish knowledge supreme and placing its value beyond doubt. (Bernfeld, 1973, pp.77-78)

Bernfeld's analogy, though dated in some respects, is nonetheless evocative. Significantly, perhaps, the two university teachers interviewed as part of this research – Reina and Julia¹⁶ – reveal a disconcerting disconnection from their own professional involvement in the pursuit of “bookish knowledge”. Reina owes her career as a linguist to the fact that those were the post-graduate grants available at the time, while Julia summarizes her academic career to date as a series of formalities and automatisms.

I started doing doctoral courses, then the thesis [...] in 94. I defended the thesis at [...] the end of 96. I think I stopped the research itself a short while ago. I don't really know what to say to you. I'd almost tell you that I haven't really begun yet. Really, I'm still in the administrative process of doing a doctorate in linguistics [...] and then continuing to publish, and then getting a [university] position in 2001 [...] And then there was a moment 4 years ago when I began Gestalt and those things, when I decided not to publish any more if it didn't come really from me. (Julia)

There is a sense here in which Julia does not actually sense herself as being present in her own life; rather, things seemed to just happen to her, she became enwrapped (and enrapt?) in predetermined procedures and processes. Far from critical minds, Reina and Julia paint a picture of intellectual conformity, of jumping

¹⁶ Julia is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

through education's hoops and going through the motions of academia. They were, in short, both invested and dependent.

If Bernfeld's analogy of the school as family is accurate, we might conclude that teacher identity is constructed around a central non-development; that of never having flown the nest. Perhaps this fledgling condition goes some way to explaining the great conservatism of teaching. Here the permanence in education reflects a desire for continuity. School is not returned to with the aim of dismantling or making unrecognizable. Things might be tweaked, but the essential characteristics are to remain intact as they form the basis of the sought-after 'familiar' (and 'familial') relationships. Christopher Bollas talks of a going forward in life that is in truth a going back, a "transformative regression" most clearly evidenced in the replaying of the family, this time as parents. Regression is a response to the "too hard to bear" realization of the complexity and isolation of one's own mind. We seek, instead, the comforting "places of the mother and father" which stand superficially in contrast to the "madness always latent in groups: to the groups of social life, and more so to the group that is mental life" (1992, pp.241-242):

[We] retreat [...] from the anguish of having a mind and living within a social order that outstrips our early childhood structures and wears thin our illusions of unity. We retreat very subtly back to transformed dyadic affiliations, back into triangular structures when we generate our own family, forward into passionate beliefs in the veracity of a single vision of reality (whether a psychoanalytic view, a political opinion, or a theological perspective), all unconsciously soothing – even when [these are] the occasions of mental pain themselves – because the mentally objectifiable dilemma is always preferable to the complex that is beyond its mental processing. (ibid., p.244)

The harder we look at teacher identity the more troubling it becomes. If, like Muriel, they have fallen in love with the figure of the 'teacher,' then have they not confused the message with the messenger? If they have fallen in love with the subject, why are they not 'doing it'? If they have *fallen into* teaching out of necessity, does this mean they are unsuitable for any other profession or trade? The last of the three options is recognized by popular culture in the brutally succinct saying, "Those who *can* do, and those who *can't* teach." This saying goes so far as to imply teaching is not a 'proper activity', that the teacher is not actually

'doing' anything, they are teaching. It also assumes teaching to be the easy option, a known entity with long holidays.

But evidence of high teacher burn out and turnover would suggest otherwise: that teaching is in fact a site of often unbearable tensions (Vandenberghe and Huberman, 1999). One such tension is that of status. Whilst a teacher may aspire to the status of 'good teacher', whilst they may be admired and loved by their students, respected by colleagues, once outside the school gates teachers' professional status is relatively low. Teaching suffers from this schizophrenic valuation, as a profession it is simultaneously admired and pitied, its status shifting and uncertain. In Mexico teaching is openly recognized not as the 'status' option but the 'security' option, guaranteeing a job for life, social security and a reasonable income. The Mexican narratives of Igor, Erendida, Fernando and Yvete¹⁷ attest to this situation. Fernando, for example, is clear that what many teachers see reflected in the faces of their students is no more than their pay cheque. Similarly, Igor testifies to a generalized mediocrity sanctioned by the union. The teaching Igor, Fernando and Erendida and Yvete point to is not a vocation, it is an occupation, a way to sell your time in return for salary.

If 'true vocation' is rare, it is unsurprising that in Mexico teacher identity is permeated with a discourse of collective and individual rights arbitrated through the union. This stands in contrast to the discourse of obligations increasingly dominant in the neo-liberal model of 'advanced' democracies. In Mexico vestiges of a teacher identity discourse are still visible, characterized not by the discourse of competence but the 'old' relations of power. Through the lens of labour relations any individual teacher aspires to be seen and to act not as an autonomous professional, but as a representative of a collective brought together around a common relationship. The Mexican Teachers' Union (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores en Educación*), with around 1.6 million members, is the largest and historically most powerful union of any kind in Latin America. Under such conditions, teachers collectively remain a socio-political force in Mexico and have

¹⁷ Igor, Erendida and Yvete are among the Mexican interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

remained active in political life, seeing themselves as direct objects of oppression, injustice and exploitation.

Yvete is an example of this politically 'tuned in' teacher. However, her narrative shows that whilst 'tuned in' politically, she had 'dropped out' of teaching itself. This is a dilemma that Fernando warns against when casting the 'politicized teacher' as one who has no time for their students. Yvete's case conforms to this stereotype: her "concern was to comply with something" sufficiently to avoid sanction.

I had to hand in reports and teaching plans for all the year [...] because the head didn't revise these each month [as they were supposed to]. So as they didn't check, I would let it pass, and at the end of the year, what would I do? I invented everything, in one night I would finish all the documentation. What that means is that in my [day to day] work I improvised a lot. (Yvete)

Her situation reminds us of Britzman's description of students who have perfected "getting by" through a series of "survival strategies" whose "furtive movements might be thought of as the learners' means to defend herself or himself against the demands of educators or, more pertinently, against the demands of learning" (1998, p.24). In Yvete's case she defends herself from the demands of *teaching*, a defence she must make against both students and the institution.

Yet whilst being negligent in her teaching, she is not negligent as *teacher*; she works hard as a union representative, even spending her own money to print flyers, to attend meetings and demonstrations. The principle that moved her was justice ("not allowing them to impose, not allowing corruption to continue, not allowing them to violate our rights"), and her responsibility is to the teacher as a collective socio-political identity, not to the teacher as a person, as a human being, nor to the student as systemic 'victim'. She has pushed her participation beyond what she now considers to be physically and emotionally bearable, and pulled others along with her, organizing, cajoling, bullying.

Yvete's union work demonstrates that this third pillar of the responsibility triangle (student, institution, teacher) can be taken up from different and contradictory perspectives. In attempting to give a collective voice to teachers, Yvete has, at times, trampled on some individual voices, not least the voice of her own overstretched body. Perhaps more worrying is the central discrepancy between

her declared irresponsibility regarding those more marginalized than herself, i.e. her students, and her own appeal to be the beneficiary of the state's consideration. She was unable or unwilling to bear the full weight of her responsibility to the students, preferring to concentrate her attention and effort on a cause more immediate to herself and to her own teacher 'clan'. There is a polarity in Yvete's demonization of the state and defence of teachers reminiscent of the dyadic relationships characteristic of Bollas' "transformed regression" (op.cit.). Within this dyad, Yvete plays the 'saviour', superheroine and defender of the weak.

Whilst we might point to her lack of commitment to teaching and learning, and doubt the maturity of her position (all take and no give), we can nevertheless admire her political commitment. Yvete's self-professed sensibility to power and authority, bitter fruit of her relationship with her father, renders her keenly alive to dangerous games of power and their injustices. Such power must be checked, resisted, contested. Nevertheless, most of the narratives are not actively concerned with the political and economic oppression of teachers; rather, they are filled with utopian sentiments more broadly directed towards students and society. This broad-brush utopianism is more common than Yvete's localized and focused political identity. Its advocates take up the charge of saving children from injustice, cruelty and an unseen life on the margins. Araceli's idealisms stemmed from a personal political agenda, as a way out of her own darkneses. She joined Brigades going to El Salvador and Nicaragua, and closer to home she would aggressively take up the call to push for change in schools:

[...] it was that neurotic part that believed I had come to this world to improve it, that neurotic part that thinks we've come to take the place of God. Yes, of course, I'll take responsibility for the other, I'll take responsibility for the situation, I have to control this, I have to control that, because that is the job God gave me. (Araceli)

Like Yvete, she now identifies her campaigning zeal as problematic: she herself is subsumed by the effort required to 'right' the world from its inequalities and dominations; yet she herself uses the privilege of her position (and forceful character) to dominate others.

Cecilia describes a similar situation:

I believed I was the saviour, because that happens to many teachers, and it happened to me as well. We believe we are the saviours of the world. We see a student with a terrible family, and their life is like this or that, and so we're going to do something. . . (Cecilia)

Cecilia and Araceli display what Britzman identifies as a fantasy of omnipotence within education. Naturally, the demands of being a 'saviour' made living with ongoing social injustice and its institutionalized manifestations in school very difficult.¹⁸

Dropping Out or Tuning In: Revisited

Cecilia's Yellow Brick Road: An exemplary narrative as fable

In a deviation from the 'before SAT - after SAT' analysis of interview data, this "revisited" section is more concerned to chart the transformations in a particular teacher's internal motivation/orientation across a career, the way in which their point of departure for professional activity has evolved. I have chosen Cecilia because she identified important shifts in her positionings and 'purpose', and regards herself as a successful classroom teacher (in part because after 30 years she still has enthusiasm for teaching). Whilst many transformations occurring in her professional life are pre-SAT it should be remembered she is talking from a post-SAT perspective. Towards the end of the account I will also include shifts in her practice identified by her as resulting directly from experiences in SAT.

As a 'novice' teacher in the period immediately after the fall of Franco, Cecilia's reaction to the repressive potential of government and schools had originally compelled her to adopt a 'total response' to the system, rejecting all of its facets, and anything within herself that might cause her to be confused with that same system. From this highly oppositional and discursive position, which she subsequently came to see as an ideological enslavement in itself, Cecilia underwent a series of evolutions - changes mostly resulting from her reflexive practice *in the*

¹⁸ *Agents provocateurs* such as Cecilia or Araceli share at least one point of contact with a systemic tendency; the *status quo* of schooling does not cease to be utopian in its claims to be preparing the coming generations to participate productively and benefit from a history of ceaseless economic and social progress – the present of the child (and the teacher) must be rigourously framed and qualified by this adult future.

face of experience. Over the years, then, Cecilia retreated from what Nietzsche might have described as “the negative nihilism of transcendental values” (Blake *et al.*, 2000, p.47), constructing in their place a value “within life and not outside it”. This involved Cecilia in a new realism, “a richer and more detailed appreciation of ‘how it is’” (ibid.). According to Blake *et al.* we could conclude that Cecilia has undergone a Nietzschean education involving the “obligation of realism”, an “attention to the way things really are, stripped of illusion and delusion: of acceptance of reality and assertion of what value one may hold in this worldly context, without reference to transcendent abstractions” (ibid.). Experience taught her to accept the generalized sweep of power within the education system as a historical fact, and to look for freedom in the spaces or cracks always appearing in and inherent to a dynamic relationship of permanent provocation. She no longer opposes official ideology with personal ideology; rather, she undermines (or complements) official ideology with a personal strategy (or practice) of freedom. Once again there are echoes of Nietzschean themes:

[Nietzsche’s] demand on us to transform our life, to make something of ourselves, is not the common idea of self-creation, rather it is a matter of giving one’s life style: of overcoming the resistance to recognising the particular life one has. What is ‘invented’ is therefore a kind of self-recognition, becoming what we are is a matter of finding oneself, of properly understanding what we have become. Human life is seen here as a struggle against our unwillingness to let ourselves be intelligible. (Blake *et al.*, 2000, p.79)

Cecilia, recognizing herself as ‘teacher’, is thoroughly situated in the subjective space where teacher, institution and student come together. She is neither an official player, nor an opposition player; rather, she is increasingly attuned to finding herself infinitely implicated in her environment, and discovering a Deleuzean enfolded subjectivity in the “very middle and muddle” (Semetsky, 2006, p.16) of schooling. From within this ‘muddled middle’ Cecilia achieves clarity through a negotiation with herself and with her colleagues whose objective is agreement and compromise, whilst avoiding agreeing to things that are in clear contradiction with her core beliefs.

In accordance with her highly-developed reality principle, her concern, which can be considered Nietzschean, is to pursue what functions within the historical

limitations of reality. What works is determined by critical observation of what is 'given' - the system, her students, her self - not so that she might collude with the *status quo*, but in order to 'freely' weave her own narrative from these unavoidable ingredients.

Below is a statement giving credence to the argument that she is developing a Foucauldian practice of freedom:

I have gained a lot of space for myself: because there is an external limit that is unquestionable, it is the limit of the law ... I don't fight with that anymore. The field is given, the framework, and then within that, you can do things lots of ways, with lots of styles, and within that I allow myself to determine the objectives that I will give myself, I prioritize them and that gives me a great tranquillity to be able to develop them myself. (Cecilia)

By desisting from frontal opposition to the system as it stands, by working in the Foucauldian cracks, Cecilia feels she has been able to maintain her enthusiasm. This in itself can be regarded as a major achievement. Cecilia has undergone a metamorphosis which saw 'revolutionary' frustration become adaptive enthusiasm. It seems that this enthusiasm owes itself to her ability to carve out a 'micro-purpose' within the 'macro-purposes' of education. This micro-purpose is to moderate between the three voices of the classroom – teacher, student, and curriculum. There is reason to believe Cecilia's motivation is to become, after Donald Winnicott (1993, p.10) and Bruno Bettelheim (1979, pp.127-141), a "good enough teacher", able not only to "engage the student's capacity for illusion and disillusion, the capacity to express and understand, and the capacity to tolerate times of being misunderstood and not understanding" but also to "help herself in tolerating the results of her or his own frustration" (Britzman, 1998, pp.41-42).

Britzman overlooks one important feature of "the good enough" teacher as embodied by Cecilia: the ability to countenance the frustration of the curriculum and its gatekeepers. Cecilia's good enough teaching involves holding the 'authorities' at bay, purposefully frustrating its intentions and pretensions. Liberation from her own pretensions to 'save' the mass of poor students, and an attention to what she herself can control and to "the power/knowledge arrangements existing under [her] very nose" (Blacker, 1998, p.362) signal her

engagement with the micro-physics of power advocated in the political philosophy of Foucault:

All those on whom power is exercised to their detriment, all who find it intolerable, can begin the struggle on their own terrain and on the basis of their proper activity (or passivity). In engaging in a struggle that concerns their own interests, whose objectives they clearly understand and whose methods only they can determine, they enter into the revolutionary process. (Deleuze and Foucault, 1977, p.216)

This “revolutionary process” occurs in the immediacy of Cecilia’s classroom and its relations of power-knowledge. She re-constructs her own authority to the degree that she can moderate her official obligations to ‘knowledge’, thereby creating her own priorities as a response to the real (and challenging) situations she finds in the classroom, which permits her to exercise a ‘moral’ authority rather than an oppressive authority. “I have come to see,” she says, “that it is possible to have authority without there being fear of authority”. This critical awareness of the nature, challenge and necessity of permanent adversity stands in contrast to the defeat she identifies in so many “bitter” and “frustrated” teachers:

[...] those that spend all day complaining about the system, and how bad the kids are, and how bad the government is, and how bad the state is, and how bad the families [...] It is they who are the most frustrated personally, they are people that are disconnected from themselves and their needs, and I can see that very clearly, right, because this job is like a mirror. The enthusiastic people that you see, who see potential in the kids, that something can be done, and that begin projects, and that have hopes, it’s those people that are connected with themselves and the people that are frustrated and bitter, well, it’s a disaster, that just seems to be a disaster to me. (Cecilia)

In the case of Cecilia, for example, as an ideologue she was anti-authoritarian, but by examining herself she was forced to recognize her own authoritarian streak, a recognition that will have had repercussions in her relationship to external authority. We might conclude that Cecilia’s sense of purpose within teaching has become to remain ‘connected’ with herself, which also means resisting those forces that seek, accidentally or purposefully, to sever that connection. Such a purpose, evolved over nearly thirty years of teaching, can be summarized as dropping out (from discursive/ideological agendas) *and* tuning in (to the authority of her own experience and of her students engagement or resistance).

Having apparently found a balance between the demands of the curriculum and the demands of reality, Cecilia now faces what for her is the most intractable problem of education:

[...] the biggest conflicts for teachers are mostly amongst ourselves, not with the students [...] with the students and the adolescents it is easier to situate yourself [...] the important work would be to see what happens amongst teachers themselves, in those micro-universes that are the school staff: there are the hierarchies, the second in commands, the unabashed that don't do much and get carried by everyone else, those that do marvellous and wonderful projects and believe themselves to be saviours of the world. (Cecilia)

Cecilia identified her own 'issues' in relation to this multiplicity in the SAT, stumbling upon an awareness of a masked competitiveness that repeatedly spiralled into serious conflicts with colleagues. The admission has enabled her to step back from conflicts as they begin to surface, and to see herself not as the 'victim' of confrontation but as 'participant'. We can perceive in this movement an increased capacity and willingness to decipher her own behaviour, and take responsibility for its less attractive components. If, as Britzman states, we defend ourselves against our own vulnerability, then Cecilia's admission of her need to compete (i.e. to confirm her value) represents a difficult act of deconstruction: "After all, confronting the unconscious means de-idealizing the self, accepting one's constitutive vulnerability, and noticing the fragility of consciousness" (Britzman, 2003, p.109).

This attention to conflict is symptomatic of a twist in Cecilia's tale of dropping out and tuning in. Questions of authority are omnipresent in Cecilia's early professional life; she was fully engaged, emotionally, ideologically, and structurally in highly polarized games of power. Her troubled and volatile positioning on the continuum between domination and freedom was fraught with ambiguity and affected by psychic and social forces that would appear to be beyond her capacity to negotiate cleanly. For Cecilia "authority is always present, to be confronted, or to submit to, always being positioned". She learns to occupy authority in a new way over the course of a career, becoming increasingly her own authority in the classroom. She has, like the Lion of Oz, admitted her fear and learnt to make a stand, becoming "self-supportive" (Perls, 1973) in her teaching.

Whilst there is a satisfaction of 'arrival', her narrative indicates that this arrival is perhaps the starting point for a second journey whose negotiations will take place around questions of subjectivity. This second 'tuning in' to subjectivity is more concerned to establish a relational porosity and transparency. If the questions of Cecilia's turn to authority were 'Who can legitimately do what?' and 'What can I legitimately do?', the questions of her relational turn are 'What are my affects and effects?' and 'What is it that occurs between us?'. It seems that this branch of the Yellow Brick Road is epitomized by the Tin Man's search for a heart.

Cecilia is clear that her experience in the SAT has been important to both legs of the journey, as we can see when asked how the SAT has contributed to finding solutions to many difficult situations of teaching; above all, she says:

[...] in the acceptance of myself, to not doubt myself, to accept my limits, and to have clear objectives also, to be clear that I am doing something I believe in and consider worthwhile. And also it has helped me to improve the quality of my emotional relationships with the students. That is the most difficult thing for me as it easily occurs with two or three, but not with the whole group, and especially not with some. This has been part of the work that is the longest journey for me.
(Cecilia)

From the inward consolidation of self-acceptance and contact, Cecilia's purpose has now become the outward movement toward acceptance of and contact with the other. She presents this shifting focus as a natural and inevitable development, the more contact she has with herself the more she can have with the students. Such contact between student and adult is identified as lying at the heart of her students' needs. Though Cecilia herself has historically favoured knowledge transfer, she is increasingly aware that her students' real need is something else. What her students want above all, she concludes, are limits, values and affection. Cecilia's sense of her educational purpose is now far removed from the transmission of curriculum. Her institutional purpose is to teach mathematics, whilst her cultural purpose is to assure a communication between the generations. With her presence, she reminds her marginalized students that they have not been completely forgotten. Unlike Juan¹⁹, who begins to understand the implications of

¹⁹ Juan is one of the Mexican interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

his position as exemplary adult only after his experience in the SAT (see chapter 14, *Great Expectations*), Cecilia seems to always have had an awareness of the potential to communicate moral authority through teacher identity:

I am always very aware of this when I go to a class. I try. I think that I always remember when I was little. Recalling my school days, I remember that there were key people as teachers, who maybe didn't even speak to me personally, but whom I saw and whom I sensed as important for me. (Cecilia)

Cecilia attests to the power of an adult presence in her life. Her intention is to provide this same presence for her own students. More than a communication of mathematics, Cecilia hopes to learn how to provide her students with a mirror of compassion, a mirror in which they see themselves being seen as singular, unique and of value. Asked what she would hope to achieve through her 'tuning in' to the heart, she replies:

Not only look at them coldly, the objectivity of "this one is here and has to get to here", I have to include that, and that seems right to me. But I think the other is also necessary, I think the students also sense it, when you look at them with affection. The other is to singularize, the capacity when you are in front of a group to singularize each and every student and be able to look at them. (Cecilia)

Such sentiments testify to a retreat from psychoanalysis' violence of the superego, its "compulsive character which manifests itself in the form of a categorical imperative" (Freud, 1923, p.35), or from what Foucault ventured as an unforgiving extension of the norm into the privacy of the subject (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, pp.189-213). The compassion that Cecilia seeks to cultivate takes shape as an antidote to the dispassionate play of teaching and learning, and as a recognition of the ubiquity of the anxieties of difference. Her aspiration toward an awareness of the classroom's multiplicity of singularities is perhaps indicative of an imaginative disposition to take the side of the learner, a position exemplified in August Aichorn's (1983) 'educational' work with youth considered to have lost their way. As Britzman explains, this taking sides

[...] has to do with considering the logic of the student and allowing this logic to guide the work of making education. Teachers might then see a great deal of their work as a problem of redirecting the address of anxiety (beginning with their own), as opposed to viewing the circulation of anxiety as an interruption of education. But in doing so,

the teacher must become interested in embodying, purposefully, an ambivalent position, entertaining some promises, foreclosing others. (Britzman, 1998, p.46)

Interestingly, Cecilia's narrative seems to support Foucault's assertion that the ethical practice of care of the self is antecedent to the care of other²⁰. Cecilia's first 'tuning in' to her own authority can be broadly regarded as a care of the self, and her second 'tuning in' to relationships appears to direct itself principally to the care of other. Having situated herself within authority, Cecilia turns her attentions to using this 'certainty' to address the ambiguity of her relations. Cecilia is not waiting for education to become 'compassionate', she is experimenting with her own ambivalent capacity for discernment and compassion, set within her duty to teach the subject. This working within and through ambivalence "is an achievement in the emotional development of the individual" (Winnicott, 1986, p.81).

If Cecilia is trying to straddle the site of 'law' (always trusted to be 'just') and the site of 'life' (always trusted to 'resonate'), this attempt reflects one of education's central dilemmas; how to reconcile the justified will of education (concerned with the survival and advancement of civilizations) with the justified will of the educated (concerned with their own survival and advancement):

The interminable goal is to craft a love and understand that it can tolerate the difference and the surprising relations that might be made between what we have been calling "the domains of law and life." But for this to occur the teacher must also reckon with her own psychic events. (Britzman, 1998, p.45)

By way of closing this discussion of Cecilia's professional journey, it would seem fitting to cite an example of her progress as regards her current concern with her empathic capacity. She mentions she has made small advances, and feels "very much more relaxed and very much closer than before to a variety of students". She refers to the example of one 'problem student', a non-learner, whose *raison d'être* in the class had become to cause trouble. Whilst this used to provoke a "very

²⁰ In an interview entitled *The Ethics of the Concern of the Self as a Practice of Freedom*, Foucault states that "Care for others should not be put before the care of oneself. The care of the self is ethically prior in that the relationship with oneself is ontologically prior" (Foucault, 2000a, p. 287). He goes on to point out that the care of the self can and has been considered as a necessary preparation for the care of others and for a subjects insertion in games of power.

aggressive" response from her, she has learnt to distinguish the boy from his actions. She gives him some slack, comes down harder when necessary, but, importantly, if she meets him later in the corridor she is able to get on with him, she bears no grudge:

[...] so once in a while I can even look at him with a certain tenderness
[...] because I can see all that lies behind him, how his family is, how his circumstances are. I can soften a little in seeing what kind of situation he is in, and that for me is very important. (Cecilia)

And perhaps Cecilia's 'tuning in' to this student might contribute to keeping him from completely 'dropping out' from the possibilities of teaching and learning.

Chapter 6: Keeping the Faith?

Cecilia's growing acceptance of her difficult student (see Chapter 5, *Dropping Out or Tuning In*) aligns her with a position of faith – the faith that the student is not *per se* a bad person. A politics of compassion places the student 'beyond good or evil', situating them squarely in their own history. From this historical perspective responsibility for the student's actions becomes socially embedded, thereby implicating Cecilia. A relationship cannot be denied, and knowledge of relationship inclines Cecilia toward taking the side of the student and away from the institution. She now must face not only the exasperating specifics of the student's disruptive behaviour in class, but also the knowledge of his totality and of herself as part of the student's life experience, part of the Lacanian mirror through which he knows himself (Bibby, 2011).

If Cecilia has renounced 'saving' students, her developing concern is to 'protect' the student from the worst excesses of discipline and punishment. This she achieves by separating the student from his acts. She relinquishes the claim to know him by his deviance from the norm (Foucault, 1991, pp.188-213). She relinquishes the enactment of education's "categorical imperative" given voice through the three strategies identified by Otto Fenichel: "direct threat, mobilization of the threat of losing love, and the promise of special rewards." (1954, p. 328). In trying to assume a more neutral position toward this disruptive student, Cecilia is withdrawing from the technologies of objectification by which "each individual receives as his status his own individuality" (Foucault, 1991, p.204). Her responsibility, it would seem, is increasingly understood by her to lie elsewhere, perhaps in maintaining some kind of contact, a *relationship*.

Fernando makes a telling statement that goes to the heart of the issues of responsibility inhabiting teacher identity:

[...] a teacher can be very good, but they will still go crazy if they want to achieve all that is asked of them. So they need to have priorities, and I believe that the number one priority has to be themselves. So, like I tell them [my students]; "You have to open up your umbrella and bring

the students under the umbrella, and work under the umbrella. It's going to rain down hard on you, but you have to know who you are with. Are you there to serve your paymaster? ... Or are you there to serve your kids? You have to decide. It's tough – if you decide to serve your bosses you are going to have a hard time, and if you decide to serve the kids then you are going to have a hard time. You will have to make a moral choice, because you can't keep them both happy". (Fernando)

A 'Catch 22' of responsibilities. What would it mean for a teacher to assume responsibility for themselves? Fernando implies that a teacher's priority must be a responsibility for what they themselves do and don't do. What is at stake here is not just "getting by" within the impossible play-off between the contingent and idiosyncratic and the universalizing project of education; rather, embracing this "Catch 22" can elevate "getting by" into Britzman's "arts of getting by":

Across the spectrum of education, the arguments between the domains of law and life return in smaller events such as the curriculum, the school rule, the university grade, the peer relations, the community demand, the teacher's intervention, and the student's refusal. Practices such as these lend their intrigue to all kinds of ambivalent relations that act upon and within the work of learning. A fugitive moment is also at stake, something more impertinent than the old story of adaptation, conformity, and compliance to the law, something quite elusive, called the "the arts of getting by". (Britzman, 1998, p.23)

Fernando would seem to indicate that in getting the balance right between student and institution, the teacher is also taking responsibility for their own professional well-being;

If you choose the kids, well at least you will know that you are doing something well, congruent with your professional ethic. Here, your professional training is not the question. Everything else is external – if you know maths, if you don't know maths. (Fernando)

Britzman asks, "Can pedagogy take the side of the learner?" (1998, p.47). Fernando's testimony reveals, at the very least, an intentionality in this direction. To choose the children is, for Fernando, to keep the vocational faith. And, from his post-SAT perspective, it is also to keep the faith with one's own history, the fact of one's own 'lost' childhood. What is more, it is also to keep the faith with yourself as knowing and discerning teacher. Importantly, the essential assumption behind Fernando's umbrella metaphor is that the institution is not truly interested in either the children's or the teacher's well-being. This conclusion is experiential as

well as political; he knows firsthand the heavy-handed pastoral attitude of schooling and its over-laden curriculum. Fernando is sceptical of an educational discourse “grounded in an economic pretext”, even when it lauds its “humanist variants” (Atkinson, forthcoming). Fernando’s teachers and students are not being saved *by* schooling, they must be saved *from* schooling. His scepticism is matched by Erendida’s belief that the ‘official’ discourse of government around the desirable and necessary competencies of teachers masks the real intention that teachers remain inadequate to the task:

The state wants teachers with certain characteristics - well at least in writing they do, because I think actually it’s more convenient for them to have teachers like they have—and so on paper it says what you want in a teacher, that you want such and such education, etc. etc. - and obviously someone who is going to teach has to have some specific characteristics, but the colleges don’t give those elements to the teachers studying there, nor do they give them to the teacher who is already a teacher, or some sort of encouragement to keep growing. (Erendida)

Her interpretation of the sub-standard training and support teachers receive is that ‘empowered’, ‘critical’ and ‘engaged’ teachers are a political inconvenience to Mexico’s patrician state. Fernando and Erendida’s testimony might be seen to support Bernfeld’s assertion that we “distrust pedagogy because we don’t believe that the tasks it sets education represent its actual social function. We rather suspect that this function is meant to be concealed and to remain unknown” (Bernfeld, 1973, p.33).

Once schooling has been discredited by a teacher, and is no longer assumed to have the well-being of teacher and learner at its heart, then the questions of *who* has responsibility for what occurs and doesn’t occur loom ever larger. In Mexico’s highly centralized education system (for example, post-revolution Mexico has always had a national curriculum), Fernando invokes a *negative* responsibility for teachers; a duty to protect and remove teaching and learning from the worst excesses of administrative and political imposition. Response-*ability* - to take students and self into account - is to barricade the classroom against the institutional agenda and to create a semi-permeable bubble in which both teacher and child can ‘relax’ into less driven relationships. Two attributes are required for

this defensive huddle – the strength to resist the demands of the system, and an appreciation of the world of the students. These are not faculties that came automatically to Fernando. He describes himself as having had an overdeveloped “sense of duty” that for many years fed his search for the good opinion of his colleagues. He had been a *matado*, a slogger, a workaholic, but by his own criteria he has not necessarily acted ethically in putting his professional status before his students’ well-being. We can conclude from Fernando’s analysis of his responsibility to the students that ethical correctness and faith in the importance of the relationship between teacher and student should not be confused with hard work and professional achievement in an institutional sense. Both Fernando’s and Erendida’s experiences are fraught with questions of motivation, of *who* they are working for, which amounts to a crisis of agency. Like Foucault, they have turned their attention to a characteristically Foucauldian question: What is it that what I do does? (Foucault, 1983, p.187).

It is a commonplace of teachers’ professional ethics that teachers’ core commitment is to the well-being of their students (Campbell, 2003). However, going beneath the surface of this commitment, the picture can become blurred. Magdalena²¹, a teacher benignly ‘in service’ to the students says that she now sees her “compulsion to care for the other by way of action” as motivated by her own compulsive aversion of conflict. In the language of Fritz Perl’s Gestalt Therapy she can be described as exhibiting the “boundary disturbance” of “confluence” (Perls, 1973) with its inability to distinguish between self and other and intolerance of difference (conflict). As such her ‘commitment’ is not to the well-being of others, or of the school as a whole; rather, it is to her own need to “be loved, accepted, to be useful, to not be a bother, to be a central part of the machine”. In desperately needing to belong, Magdalena is ‘obliged’ to separate herself from ‘reality’ by ignoring its real and necessary differences. What her doing does, first and foremost, is reduce her own anxiety.

²¹ Magdalena is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix. 2 for a brief description.

Post-SAT Dora is able to identify what she now sees as a demanding dependency of being accepted within her apparent commitment to the proper education of the children:

Well, [I'm] not a person who does things well because [that's how I feel] deep down inside, not from my love for another person, but instead based on a requirement, a demand: 'Look! I'm doing this, but love me for it'. (Dora)

What is more, doing things "well" for Dora means that "nothing should be disorganized". It also means bossily extending this organization across her surroundings, and this, paradoxically, sets her at odds with the messiness of others. Yvete also recounts frustrated efforts to achieve belonging through service: "How many things have I done so that I wouldn't be rejected? Or how many things do I do so I won't be rejected?" Despite great effort to ensure acceptance, Yvete is now aware that she did not 'belong' in the world as she imagined:

I felt I was the most loving woman in the world, kindness on legs. No? So then to realize that neither my gaze, nor my presence, or anything about me communicated this, but more like I generated fear [...] That has been difficult. (Yvete)

On realizing the discrepancy between her conscious intent and its effect on others, Yvete is thrown into doubt:

I would say 'And what about me? What about my objectives? What about my goals? What about my family? My children? My partner? Everything! What? So, then, what am I? And what about the [union] struggle? And what about love? Like, why love? Love, what for?' (Yvete)

It appears that what is becoming clear to Yvete is that personal and professional negotiations around 'service' are not as transparent as once imagined. Her situation demonstrates how murky the ethical waters can become as soon as we begin to look at motivation. As a hyper-committed union activist dedicated to the collective good, did she abandon her private life, or did she find a worthwhile cause, or was she driven to resolve some intimate passion? Who and what was she fighting? How was her solidarity an imposition?

Solidarity, service, love can be found wanting on closer inspection, taking their place within disguised strategies of individual struggle and survival. Other signs of

'bad faith' make their appearance in the narratives. Most significantly is the prevalence of 'simulation' within professional practice. Dora's narrative captures the condition of bureaucratic simulation found in the audit culture of Mexican schools: as she explains, procedures are created and implemented whose results are effectively inert, without consequences or effects. These are the ineffective administrative measures to which Fernando refers, currently being superseded as the Mexican state modernizes toward a new performativity and accountability discourse centred on academic results. Dora is made responsible for the maintenance of her part of a collective administrative simulation. She is all too aware that the authority allocated to her is not only invented by the institution; it is simultaneously undermined or denied by the broader political system. She knows that teachers submit plans to her not because they feel them to be relevant to their work, but because it is a bureaucratic requirement. In most cases these plans will bear little resemblance to what actually occurs in the classroom (see also Moore and Ash, 2003, on "ritualistic reflection"). She knows also that there is relatively little she can do to redress shortcomings in any meaningful way, and that her function is to police the letter of the law but not to rock the boat by demanding teachers uphold the spirit of the law.

I mean the goal is for *them* to discover that planning is necessary, not that they fulfil a requisite of required planning as if it were an administrative document. [It should be] that what's planned is really what's being taught, so it can also be evaluated. (Dora)

Dora's relationship to authority is qualified by this disjuncture between appearance and reality. Not only is she a reluctant judge feeling the diverse impositions of her role, she is also a reluctant judge with her hands effectively tied. Within her field of purpose, paradoxically she displays her sense of being without *real* purpose. Such simulation creates a parallel 'bad faith' universe at the heart of the school, a site where the appearance of learning substitutes for real learning. What does it mean for teacher identity to have to learn the art of simulation and to witness its collective manifestation? How can teachers keep faith with their institutional role when this role 'encourages' them to 'fake' knowledge and learning?

Keeping the Faith: Revisited

From the new perspective on education being cultivated through her SAT experience, Dora is coming to align herself with Anna Freud's cautionary recommendation: "We must not demand too much from one another" (Freud, 1930, p.121). This is evidenced by her fantasy invitation to her teachers to "take a holiday" from the normal business of work. This invitation is also extended to herself as she becomes gripped by the sense that she needs to relax. Dora imagines telling her teachers to "just do whatever you want to do; don't show me your plan; don't do anything." Ironically, she thinks "maybe that way things *would* happen." Things might happen when the system ('incarnate' in herself) stops manifesting its power and inciting compliance and/or resistance. Things might happen when she (the system) ceases to police education and adopts a receptive ethos.

"Yesterday," explains Dora, "I was telling my roommate that now I'm more interested in the relationship - not between teacher and advisor - but more like the idea that they talk to me about how things are going for them". Like Igor, Dora has, at least conceptually, distanced herself from the function provided for her by the official agenda and its procedures. It is now another type of interaction she is looking to establish, one that does not turn around her investment in the systemic gaze and "categorical imperative", but emanates from her immediate relations. We can detect the tentative imaginings of a practice of truth-telling asserting itself above structure, and providing an ethical compass for agency and authority. As with Igor, there is some evidence that she is migrating toward a psychological or therapeutic ethics as a practice of self (Rose, 1999). This would appear to be moving her toward a different type of participation in games of power, one that might result in her wanting and needing to use "as little domination as possible" (Foucault and Rabinow, 1997, p. 298). She has seen through her games of power; seen through her position as judge of other teachers and of good practice; seen through the authority of her knowledge. She now describes her evaluative and prescriptive expertise in the following terms:

I was just sitting there at my desk analyzing a book, comparing it with another, saying that it wasn't useful, or that it was useful, but based on my power: 'Look, I know and you don't'. (Dora)

Or, once more, this time looking at her own teaching:

Today I realized why I always wanted the children to be quiet, because I'd get so worked up about—for example in my head I was all prepared, that from 9:00 to 9:15 we would do such and such, and then from 9:15 to 9:45 such and such...[I] was very programmed. [And it was like things weren't] really bearing fruit in that way, because I was very rigid. According to me it was so the children learned and were prepared—they are little things, 4 or 5 years old. I implemented some activities, but they were based in my neurosis: they weren't based in love, not based on their learning and growing, but that they *had* to learn, this group *has* to do well, we shouldn't even hear a fly in this group, nothing should be disorganized. (Dora)

Dora has come face to face with her previously disguised intentionality, and can recognize her compulsion for order and progress as an imposition on the children, as an anxious exercise of power more than a natural concern for these infants' well-being. Once more, we may see as problematic that Dora seems to take personal responsibility for an overbearing concern for learning which is as much systemic as it is her own 'neurosis'. However, awareness of her own programmatic intensity can be seen as a first step to a broader critique of education's charged agendas for students and teachers, providing us with a poignant synopsis of traditional education's relation to the child and to the present. Dora's account captures education's fear of and hostility to the unintentioned 'now'. Ironically, it is precisely children's capacity to inhabit the present (especially through play) that is one of the iconic qualities of childhood, remembered with so much nostalgia by adults, yet also the target of so much individual and institutional constraint. Anna Freud identifies a vengeful spirit behind this oppressive tendency:

This renunciation of the pleasure derived from his [sic] infantile impulses which is forced upon the child has two important effects on his mental development. He now pitilessly applies this standard which has been forced upon himself to the rest of the world. The moral indignation which is aroused by such acts [of sensual gratification] is the measure of the effort he himself has had to make to conquer his instinctive impulses. (Freud, 1931, p.61)

Reading from Freud we might conclude that education is not aligned against the unintentioned now or the present as a negative, (i.e. as an absence of learning), but as a threatening positive (i.e. it is in such a present that instinctive, sensual and playful pleasures will take shape). Similarly, we might question how much the

Protestant work ethic favours work and its results, or how much it mitigates against idleness and its results ('The devil finds work for idle hands'). Foucault was clear that the modern subjects' governmentality aims not only at cultural and economic productivity, it aims to restrain the body and its idle pleasures (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, pp.179-187). The creeping of idle or sensual pleasure into a teacher's discourse or practice is therefore a radical revolt from the intentionality of education. Witness, for example the systemic spasm that occurred when Rebeca proposed the introduction of one hour of silent reading a week in her Spanish class ('But *surely* they can't be learning anything?'). From this angle, Carla's suspension of formal classes to tell jokes, or Dora's imagined invitation to her teachers to "take a holiday" from the normal business of work, are more than whimsical anecdotes.

Some similar themes appear in the case of Rebeca. We find, for example, that she, like Igor, has modified her understanding and practice in evaluating her students' progress. She has not gone so far as Igor in incorporating a component of self-evaluation, but she has shifted her focus from grading based exclusively on demonstrably acquired knowledge and skills, to grading that contemplates other more nuanced, personalized, intimate and subjective appraisals of performance, such as effort and attitude. That Rebeca is quite anxious about these modifications is evidence that they are both significant for her own identity as a teacher, and significant within an institutional context. Rebeca obviously feels that as a teacher she is a standard bearer for power-knowledge. An academic focus would appear to be her responsibility, and this also chimes with her own valuation of the 'virtues' of knowledge. However, subsequent to the SAT she feels obliged to enlarge her criteria for grading students:

I realized up to what point I was being too rational and cold when it came to evaluating ... Now, for example, I see the students' progress much more globally and that makes me feel much prouder of them, something that just didn't understand before. I got on well with the students, but I only really saw their grades, that was that! And also, now it isn't so difficult for me to say: 'OK, academically maybe this student is a three, but they have tried hard, they've read a lot of books, which that grade does not reflect.' And so I can change the grade feeling myself to be morally legitimated, that I'm not cheating, or cheating the student, or the system, or myself. (Rebeca)

Rebeca goes on to explain the great disappointment students can feel when they know that they have worked hard, in part because of her encouragement and pressure, and at the end of the day are given a low score. Having been sensitized to the whole person in the SAT, Rebeca is now struggling with one of the central technologies of power available to government – examination, evaluation, and quantification (Foucault, 1991, pp.187-213). She feels the strain of being the instrument of government's obligation to describe its subjects and thereby individualize and totalize subjectivity:

Marx, Nietzsche, Weber, Lukacs, Habermas, and Foucault each, in his different way, suggested that calculation and calculability have become central not only in projects for the domination of nature, but also in relation to human beings. We have entered, it appears, the age of the calculable person, the individual whose individuality is no longer ineffable, unique, and beyond knowledge, but can be known, mapped, calibrated, evaluated, quantified, predicted, and managed. (Rose, 1996, p.88)

The state, through teachers, acquires enormous power over the entire population as they are 'calculated' in schools. Likewise the teacher is invested with this power-responsibility by the state. We have probably all been witnesses of, or subject to, the creative and destructive power of these calculations as they identify-create successful and capable students, or identify-create failure and impotence. Rebeca is certainly aware of this process of creation-destruction, but is increasingly able to locate its bias toward the academic within the immediate and local reality of her relationships. How, she asks, do you grade an academically poor student with whom you have a very good relationship, a student who has engaged with you with trust and willingness? A low grade, she says, is lived by the student as a betrayal of the relationship, and she agrees that there is indeed a betrayal.

I believe that I've always treated [the students] well, its something that they have valued in me. But didn't ever counted for anything, in the evaluation, never, never. And so, that made me uncomfortable also. For example, with this student I have a really good relation, which means to say that they also trust a lot in me, and then in some way they feel frustrated and betrayed, and I also feel as if I am betraying them. I didn't really understand why, or how to solve this. (Rebeca)

This painful conflict is integral to her role as agent of the procedures of objectification identified by Foucault as central to the institutions of the state and

their administration of life (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, pp.188-205). Her difficulty is what to do with education's *excess*: all the information and experience that falls through the cracks between and within administrative technologies.

We might suggest that Rebeca is situated on the interface between the three-dimensional excess of reality and its multiplicities, and the two-dimensional technologies of calculation (Rose, 1999, pp.147-154.)²². As a result of her experience in the SAT programme she becomes more aware of the hubris of the power invested in her, the impossibility and 'unfairness' of its claims to be able to effect such a transposition, or its denial of the relevance of this excess. Rebeca attempts to move toward a resolution of these conflicts through the inclusion within her grading calculations of an appraisal of characteristics, qualities and activities that are not concrete expressions of academic achievement, but that form a part of her experience of her perceptions of the students and their relations in the classroom, including their relations to themselves (e.g. motivation), peers and herself. Through such fleshing out of the flatness of grades, Rebeca attempts to keep faith with the multiplicity of the classroom, but perhaps more importantly *to maintain her faith in education itself and with her own identity as a teacher*. She can no longer continue to disregard the quality of relationship, and the classroom as a relational space.

Rebeca is aware of the limitations of her adjustment; it represents a remedial gesture, which, like Cecilia's adjustment to her difficult student, is designed to moderate the worst exaggerations of the system's obligation to knowledge. Factoring in subjective criteria such as attitude and motivation as a way of upping academically disappointing grades suggests that Rebeca is beginning to take the side of the student, and is perhaps reaching for Fernando's protective umbrella. What she is protecting is not only her students, it is the relationship *she* has with

²² Rose asserts that human 'reality' or experience is (at least) three dimensional and is correspondingly nuanced and complex, whilst the technologies that have been developed to map the human sciences have tended to be two-dimensional. He uses the example of how human development was mapped by photographing babies 'in action'. These two dimensional photos were subsequently further simplified into line drawings that focused on what was regarded as the key information. Rose points out that considerable amounts of information are being accidentally or deliberately lost in these processes, information that has effectively become 'excess'.

them, and for this reason it is also a protection of that part of her that has become invested in those relationships.

Regardless of its rudimentary nature, Rebeca is probably correct in worrying that her practice of 'contextualizing' poor academic grades may at some point be challenged, as the education system she represents claims its power over our lives precisely on the grounds of its rationality and objectivity, that is, on its claim to reveal the truth about the educated subject. In this sense, the purpose of education is not only to furnish students with truth, it is also to extract truth from the students themselves. The teacher is not only a communicator, but also an interpreter, who, by means of examination and recording, is to create reliable knowledge about each individual student and the status of their 'soul' (Rose, 1999). Rebeca's crisis of faith with education is situated precisely at this point where her identity as teacher is conflated with the identity of a technician of the "science of individualization" (Rose, 1999, p.139).

But, if we are to accept Foucault's critique of modern power, then we cannot view this evaluative component as an add-on to the principal activity of teaching. According to Foucault, as an institution of the state charged with the totalizing and individualizing administration of a population, "the school became a sort of apparatus of uninterrupted examination" (Foucault, 1991, p.198). This permanent principle of examination

[...] enabled the teacher, while transmitting his [sic] knowledge, to transform his pupils into a whole field of knowledge [...] the examination in school was a constant exchanger of knowledge; it guaranteed the movement of knowledge from the teacher to the pupil. But it extracted from the pupil a knowledge destined and reserved for the teacher. (ibid.)

Rebeca's anxiety, her worry about perhaps unwisely taking things into her own hands and/or being challenged about her new practice, is not without good cause. She clearly has some awareness that hers is not an insignificant challenge to the order of things, though she may not appreciate the full 'revolutionary' weight of her reaction against the objectivity of academic grading. Rebeca, in full or partial consciousness, is purposefully interfering with procedures critical to the creation of a modern subjectivity and to the modern exercise of power over life. It is worth

quoting Foucault at some length on this subject because he is particularly trenchant in his appraisal of the historical power and danger of such apparently innocuous and justifiable procedures as grading students:

The examination as the fixing, at once ritual and "scientific," of individual differences, as the pinning down of each individual in his [sic] own particularity (in contrast to the ceremony in which status, birth, privilege, function are manifested with all the spectacle of their marks), clearly indicates the appearance of a new modality of power in which each individual receives as his status his own individuality, and which he is linked by his status to the features, the measurements, the gaps the "marks" that characterize him and make him a "case."

... It is the examination which, by combining hierarchical surveillance and normalizing judgement, assures the great disciplinary functions of distribution and classification, maximum extraction of forces and time, continuous genetic accumulation, optimum combination of aptitudes, and, thereby, the fabrication of cellular, organic, genetic, and combinatory individuality. With it are ritualized those disciplines that may be characterized in a word by saying that they are a modality of power for which individual difference is relevant. (Foucault, 1991, p.204)

Foucault pinpoints that other purpose of pedagogy that Bernfeld alludes to when his fictional "Minister of Education, Machiavelli" asserts that the "crucial problem of education [is] organizational" (Bernfeld, 1973, p.71). It is in the organization of the subjects of education (their separation into bourgeoisie and proletariat) that education effects its principal achievement of conserving the existing distribution of power and shifting it incrementally toward the ruling and educated classes:

There can be no doubt that education fulfils this function. World reformers and moralists, educators and religious men may grieve about it, or they may grow jubilant over some ephemeral symptom as if it portended a permanent reversal, but children of any age grow up and become men [sic] typical of their time and place. It makes no difference whether they received an education, whether it was good or bad, or what method it adopted. The individual differences between them disappear and what remains is the great common herd of citizen sheep that yields the wool which returns the cost of breeding, care, and multiplying, plus a profit. They all look alike as sheep will, although the shepherd boy assures us that each has a face of its own ... (Bernfeld, 1973, p.83)

Though the liberal instinct may feel duty bound to protest at Bernfeld's critique of education, its pitiless combination of psychoanalytic and Marxist perspectives, it

does provide a useful 'harmonic' for the Foucauldian vision of the school as the site of objectification through individualization. Bernfeld reminds us forcefully that a distinctive face, perhaps visible up close, does not alter an essential enslavement within the masses.

Rebeca's situation is, perhaps, indicative of the deeply conservative nature of education. She worries and frets over striking out in a direction distinct from what she perceives as the norm. As an educated subject, she has been given her individuality, she is a "unique" case; but the corresponding ability or duty to act "uniquely" is not her default position; rather, it is something that she is beginning to learn as she begins to weigh her own concerns in the balance. In her small resistance to 'objective' academic grading, Rebeca may be seen to be asserting her idiosyncratic presence within education, and reasserting the subject of education as relational and social rather than "cellular, organic, genetic, and combinatorial". She fears that put under the microscope her grading habits may incite accusations of favouritism or randomness, and she is aware that her responsibility requires a careful re-negotiation if she is to systematically translate her new-found sensitivity to students into the official language of calculation without risk to herself. The possibility of this negotiation would seem to be becoming a difficult knowledge central to her own purpose as a teacher, perhaps of more import than her capacity to transmit her cherished Cervantes to students. This is precisely because it involves overcoming a perceived risk and a lived fear or anxiety. What is most important about Rebeca's new practice is that it results from the re-evaluation of two vital fears: on the one hand, the fear of stepping out of line with her institutional responsibility (the fear of discipline and punishment?), and on the other, her fear of betraying her relationship with the students (the fear of an abuse of her own power?). It appears that her experience in the SAT programme has obliged her to re-evaluate the importance of relationship and multiplicity, the unfathomable richness of experience, and to 'know' the magnitude of the total betrayal of this reality principle. One fear has vanquished another fear²³. Rebeca

²³ As Slavoj Žižek notes of such transformations, the "turn towards emancipatory enthusiasm takes place only when the traumatic truth is not only accepted in a disengaged way, but is fully lived" (2011, p.xii). It is worth noting, that unlike Igor and Dora, and perhaps to Žižek's disappointment, Rebeca does not demonstrate any signs of the intensity that might "transfigure totally who one was and what one thought" (Miller, 1993, p.361). She does not contemplate, for example, even in the

had been loyal to the principle of 'outing' inefficiency in her own students, and poor learning invariably had equalled a bad grade, regardless of quality of the her student relations. But upholding this principle came at a cost. Good relations become problematic if they are not accompanied by academic achievement. A good relation

means that they also trusted in me a lot, and so in some ways they feel frustrated and betrayed [with a low academic grade], and I feel like I am betraying them. I didn't really understand all this, or have any idea how to resolve it. (Rebeca)

We can imagine that only *on the emergence* of hurt within these relationships of trust did Rebeca begin to comprehend the dilemmas of painful multiplicity. If she had wanted to maintain a clinical, 'objective' approach to grading, post-SAT this is proving difficult to sustain. Rebeca is no longer oblivious to the potential for harm to those she describes as "the newly arrived" (which can be understood as 'the innocent'):

You end up making them pay for many things, that they surely shouldn't have to carry the can for, because they are, how you might say, like the newly arrived in society. No? (Rebeca)

Rebeca is not alone. Increasing concerns over grading echo throughout the narratives. For Muriel Rosa grading is her biggest problem with teaching. Conrado is adamant that he is in no position to judge his students. Igor has moved toward student self-assessment; he feels he could not know enough about the students to be able to assess their progress. Araceli, in characteristically rebellious mode, used her authority to wave failing students through the system, thus entering into conflict with her colleagues:

My logic was crushing – it was 'How are you going to mess with this child because they've had a bad year, because their parents have separated! Leave them be! It is life that is going to fail or pass them.'

form of fantasy, a utopia of life without grades. Generally speaking, hers is a quieter, more subdued, yet thoughtful and nuanced re-negotiation of the games of power within a generally accepted institutional and cultural framework. We might put this down to a cautious and thoughtful disposition, or that Rebeca is perhaps more invested by modernity than her Mexican counterparts, or alternatively infer that the sophisticated strategies and operations of pastoral power in the Spanish context do not offer much scope for revolt. Whatever the reason for her tentativeness, Rebeca's narrative provides evidence that the SAT programme has generated some transformative "terror" in her practice.

And so I banged my head against a wall, against my colleagues, because they lived according to the rules, lived normally. I was the abnormal one. And that is where I would get exasperated. (Araceli)

Not all teachers are happy to be the gatekeepers of education's proximal zones of exclusion. The narratives reveal a desire to disown significant knowledge of students; perhaps curriculum 'knowledge' can be assessed, but these teachers are increasingly unsure that this partial information can be equated to merit. Their collaboration or compliance in this objectification of students is one of teachings difficult knowledges. Rebeca's narrative, and many others in the research, may indicate that some teachers are learning, post-SAT, to embrace *the terror* of what has been learnt and what 'must' be taught, and to assume responsibility of *a faith in education's relationships* as something that obliges them to transgress a faith in schooling.

Chapter 7: Questions of Purpose - Discussion and Conclusions

Grouped together under the general heading “*Questions of Purpose*”, I have attempted to group and present evidence from the research narratives which could be said to illustrate teachers’ engagement with educational ideologies or discourses. As Žižek points out:

[...] in order to pass from abstract propositions to people’s “real lives,” it is necessary to add the unfathomable density of a lifeworld context. Ideology is not constituted by abstract propositions in themselves, rather, ideology is itself this very texture of the lifeworld which “schematizes” the propositions, rendering them “livable”. (Žižek, 2011, p.3)

As the testimonial evidence reveals, teachers cannot help but become enmeshed in the schematics of schooling, and of their own lives. But attention to teachers’ experiences demonstrates that the “livable” facet of ideology is equally “unlivable.” Textures of abstract propositions in the lifeworld are not always smooth, and might just as easily threaten meaninglessness, chaos and despair as bathe our life in order and purpose. School as institution and vehicle of “education, education, education”²⁴ is one of the most densely ideological territories imaginable (Ball, 1999), and the cost of survival, as Žižek (paraphrasing Arthur Feldmen) warns, can be our lives: “the price we usually pay for survival is our lives” (Žižek, 2011, p.xv).

Whilst ideology is, by political necessity, always heading towards its “landings”, the means by which it can manifest itself in people’s lives, it is likewise always trying to take off again by unloading the inevitable complications of these necessary manifestations. Ideology seeks to present itself to us as cost free, or at the very least, more pro than con. Žižek hence describes ‘ideology’ as requiring:

a reduction to the simplified “essence” that conveniently forgets the “background noise” which provides the density of its actual meaning.

²⁴ In the spirit of Tony Blair’s and the Labour Party’s 1997 electoral campaign agenda which promised to place education as priority number one, alongside the National Health System.

Such an erasure of the “background noise” is the very core of utopian dreaming. (Žižek, 2011, p.7)

Moreover,

What this “background noise” conveys is – more often than not – the obscenity of the barbarian violence which sustains the public face of law and order. This is why [Walter] Benjamin’s thesis, that every monument of civilization is a monument of barbarism, has a precise impact on the very notion of being civilized: “to be civilized means to know one is potentially a barbarian”. (ibid.)

Thus, it is only by ignoring the myriad details of schooling that we can remain enchanted with its ends (purposes) and its means. The ‘civilized’ assumptions and pretensions of education, enshrined in theory and policy, are confounded by a complex reality which can be accessed precisely in the “thick description[s]” (Geertz, 1973) of qualitative research. Joseph Schwab (1956/1978), focusing on the school, maintains that educational theory and its curricula can never hope to encompass the complexity of the classroom. This complexity becomes part of the noise of schooling by which theory is disrupted. Hence the importance of educational research documenting such “background noise”. Bibby (2011), for example, reclaims the concerns of primary school students subjected to the ideologies of modern education in Britain, and makes us all too aware of the discrepancies between education’s pretensions and what is experienced and engendered in the subjects of education. As Britzman reminds us, “education demands that everyone get to the point” (Britzman, 1998, p.37), yet interpretations of the point may differ widely between authorities, teachers and students. The point as *activity* might be the same, but the point as *experience* or *interpretation* will vary from subject to subject. For one student the point of education may be humiliation, whilst for another in the same class it will be the confirmation of superiority. These wild discrepancies between ideology and the “texture[s] of the lifeworld” (Žižek, 2011, p.3) are the means by which ideologies of purpose can be exposed as not transposable to the territory of classrooms, or of capturing the ethical cost of such a transposition.

If Bibby’s psychoanalytically informed research problematizes educational discourse by giving voice to students, the present research aims to give voice to teachers, who, I argue, are no less entrapped by their own anxieties and by

systemic demands upon them than their students. Insensitive teachers are not *the* problem, as we might infer from some of Bibby's portrayals of classroom dynamics; rather, teachers themselves are creatures bound to their intimate and social history. Why should Bibby suppose that teachers are duty bound to exhibit a greater freedom than their students? If education is one of the means by which we become invested by power, we might better assume that the longer we are in education, i.e. the more educated we are, the more 'barbaric' is our civilization. Anna Freud made a similar claim by speaking of the vengeful facet of oppression – do unto others as has been done unto yourself – and there is every reason to believe that the main overall effect of public education generally on student values mirrors the effect that Philip Jacob identified as the effect of higher education on American students, which was “to bring about [the] general acceptance of a body of standards and attitudes characteristic of college bred men and women in the American community” (Jacob, 1956, p.6).

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, Anna Freud is adamant that the purpose of education is to wage war on all those features of ourselves that threaten culture, civilization, economy, and authority. The educated subject must be disarmed at the same time as they are being re-armed to continue the fight for the order of things. The equation of war with education might seem extreme. However, such bellicose language perhaps helps us to comprehend the import of the struggles, the magnitude of permanent socio-political provocations occurring in and around education. Žižek, talking about the presentation of the Lebanon war in the film *Lebanon*, decries how a focus on the intimate traumas of war is an example of “ideology at its purest” in its ability to “obliterate the entire ethico-political background of the conflict”:

Such a “humanization” thus serves to obfuscate the key question: the need for ruthless political analysis of what is being done in terms of political-military activity. Our politico-military struggles are precisely not an opaque History which brutally disrupts our intimate lives – they are a field in which we are always engaged, even if it is in a mode of ignorance. (Žižek, 2011, p.58)

Just as we cannot separate ourselves from politics, so politics cannot separate itself from ourselves. For this reason Foucault recurs to the “politics of ourselves”, and

for this reason an introspective project of awareness and a critical attitude to the intimate present cannot be conflated with an excess of nihilism, as long as the subject knows themselves to be viscerally embedded in social history. Indeed, one might argue that it is only by such an attention to personal history that we come to see ourselves as invested by history, rather than our own creations (as the dominant ideology of liberal humanism would have us believe). Žižek, in his introduction to the same book, asserts that the “‘spontaneous’ state of our daily lives is that of a lived lie, to break out of which requires continuous struggle. The starting point for which is to become terrified by oneself” (Žižek, 2011, p.xii). As Britzman maintains:

In psychoanalytic terms, for the self to be more than a prisoner of its own narcissism, the self must bother itself. It must learn to obligate itself to notice the breaches and losses between acts and thoughts, between wishes and responsibilities, between dreams and waking life. To think is to haunt one’s thoughts, to be hunted by thoughts. (Britzman, 1998, p.32)

Foucault, Žižek and Britzman, assert human fallibility in opposition to the positivist projects of and for humanity. Through this focus on the subject’s fallibility, history’s circularity becomes clear; we condition history at the same time that history conditions us. It is to ourselves, to our own subjectivity, that we must look if we are to trouble the embodied narcissism of ideologies, if nothing else because they are, ultimately, our own creation. Stripped of a punishing God, humanity can only blame itself for what has happened to it, there is nowhere else to look but in the mirror.

What do the narratives of this research show about these teachers who have paused long and hard before the mirror? How has this experience recalibrated their purposes and their sense of purpose? How has it recalibrated for them the purpose of education? There are signs that seismic shifts are occurring in a territory that was obviously already criss-crossed by fault lines. To get a better sense of the pattern underlying the idiosyncratic and singular occurrences of each narrative, it is helpful to return to the background so that we might distinguish it from the foreground of transformations. Foucault’s problematization of individualizing and totalizing technologies of power characteristic of modern

government is particularly illuminating in this respect (Foucault, 2000d). Likewise, in his related distinction between the universal and the specific intellectual we can find perspectives on purpose that are useful to this present discussion.

Considering first the nature and problem of a power that is both individualizing and totalizing, we see its effects everywhere in education. Indeed, we might say that the *purpose* of education is to individualize and totalize. Bernfeld implies as much in his image of our educated subjects as a flock of sheep, each with its distinctive face (only distinguishable to the shepherd). Totalities are present as universals such as the unquestioning valuation of the curriculum, and in the norms of standards and development. They are also present in education as a compulsory “right”, and its attempt to address the total human experience (physical, moral, intellectual, spiritual, creative). Education is totalizing also in its temporal claims, in the way it makes the present of the educated subject answerable to the past and to the future, tying each lived moment of learning to an academic-professional-citizen trajectory. And conversely, individualization is present in the profiling of students, teachers and schools, profiling which fragments an individual from its ‘community’ in the act of comparing it with that same community, captured as the norm. The subjects of education, and even its institutions, are atomized and can be organized according to principles convenient within the relations of power.

If these are the underlying ideological purposes of education, in some ways indistinguishable from a Marxist critique of its ‘bad faith’ alliance with capitalism, we might ask if the experience of the SAT altered teachers’ ignorant or knowing engagement in such purposes? To return to Žižek’s point, have teachers become sufficiently terrified of their individualized/individualizing and totalized/totalizing selves to begin the work of continuous struggle for a new teacher identity and practice? There is considerable evidence in the data of teachers developing “lines of flight” (Deleuze, 1987) out of these personally and institutionally known territories. Regarding the total obligation to knowledge, Cecilia’s ‘meditation’ experiment is briefly opening up another educational paradigm involving ‘anti-knowledge’ and turning the students’ gaze back on themselves, so that for a revolutionary five minutes the curriculum becomes the content of their own mind. Conrado, previously occupying the classroom in a totality of thought and

deliberation, is attempting to occupy the classroom through the more obtuse quality of presence, a presence shaped around the dialogue between his multiplicities, including the diktats of his body. Whereas being correct and fair had been his main concern, post-SAT his principal aim is to be creatively connected to himself and to his students.

Creative connection sets the present time of teaching in dramatic relief to the totalities of curriculum and development, and favours the spontaneous emergence of significant experience among the group. In general, the over-arching valuation of knowledge at “a certain price” (Foucault in Miller, 1994, p.302) seems to have diminished as a result of teachers’ experience in the SAT programme. This re-appraisal of the cost-benefit analysis includes not only cost to the student, but to themselves as people and to their relations. Rebeca, for example, has indeed become terrified of her “cold” objectivity when grading. She is no longer so willing to trample over the trust of her students. Nieves is contemplating relinquishing her imposing demand that students finish her perfect physical education class with a shower. In so doing she concedes a space in her heart to the students’ resistance to ‘total knowledge’. Seen panoramically, the totalizing purposes of education are being replaced or complemented within the narratives by post-SAT lines of flight toward practices and perspectives that redress the balance of education by recovering the idiosyncratic and contingent (Moore, 2004).

This includes the idiosyncratic component of each *teacher*, and there is good reason to believe that the radical reflexivity of the SAT experience, though not touching upon professional identity directly, is easily transposed by these teachers to the professional realm and provides a stimulus for developing this identity on the lines proposed by Maggie MacLure (1993). Identity, for MacLure, is a matter of “arguing for yourself”, and the narratives suggest that teachers are increasingly taking up this responsibility. Their purpose/identity is no longer so determined by reference to the ‘universal’ teacher, but rather to the teacher that *I* am, can or want to be. In Foucauldian terms this represents a shift from individualization (which implies the referent to totality) toward singularity (which implies an embedding in reality). “How does one really become an adult?”, asks Žižek, responding, “By knowing when to break the specific rule one is committed to” (Žižek, 2011, p.8).

Rules, imposed and self-imposed, are totalities, and becoming an adult, implies Žižek, involves an awareness of the primacy of the exception, of the singular, and the ability to take on responsibility for taking Robert Frost's divergent, "less travelled" road²⁵. Rebeca makes just such a move when she adjusts her grading system from an unbending rule of knowledge and learning to include the singularities and (inter)subjectivities of relationship.

Rebeca's adjustment points to the vital question of transformation and becoming. Identity work is not only about arguing your 'corner'; these teachers are increasingly able also to argue against themselves, not only conceptually, but in practice. The narratives provide examples of teachers like Rebeca, Cecilia and Conrado embracing a Foucauldian call to freedom by becoming other than themselves. Post-SAT teachers are, as Britzman suggests, hunting down their own thoughts. Cecilia, for example, targeted her hierarchical thinking with regard to academic success, and is practising an expansion of sympathy toward 'less able' or 'difficult' students. Her growing concern is to be able to see and to embrace - intellectually, emotionally and behaviourally - the singularity of all of her students. As Rebeca and Conrado demonstrate, it appears that contact with the singularities of self, including the singularity of an emergence of multiplicity, facilitates the contact with the singularity of students and promotes a reluctance to subject these students to the excesses of individualizing and totalizing power. Where the dominant discourse of education distributes individuals around the task of teaching and learning as a manifestation of an obligation to knowledge, the post-SAT universe of these teachers would seem to be moving toward situating the obligations of teaching and learning within a *knowledge of relationship*.

Bibby underlines that there is another, unofficial learning going on in education, the learning occurring within groups. If schooling relies on the group economically, it wilfully ignores the group as a site of learning, focusing rather on what the individual learns or doesn't learn. Schooling occurs through the group, and yet education largely ignores its existence as providing grounds for learning. It seems as if this fundamental intentionality of education is undermined by the teacher

²⁵ From his poem *The Road Not Taken*.

development occasioned by the SAT-programme. These teachers are turning their attention away from classroom relations as arbitrated by knowledge, to relations arbitrated by a knowledge of a common humanity. It is these new relations, including new relationships with the self, that are increasingly foregrounded. As Bibby states: "It is in paying attention to the group's focus on itself and its members that both the group and the individuals within it can learn about and from themselves" (Bibby, 2011, p.77). Being confronted by these 'others' of the group is simultaneously a confrontation with the self. A comprehensive acknowledgement of otherness implies a questioning of the self, an opening up of its closed borders and an inevitability of movement and migrations in subjectivities and identities.

Section 3:

Questions of Order

The testimonies of this research suggest that what is most difficult in teaching is the ever-present threat of losing control, of chaos and disorder, of being out of one's depth and insufficient to the task in hand. The attempt to maintain a tireless order and stamp a directionality on education can be regarded as a reaction to this public and private fear of a loss of 'civilization' and collective and individual sense of meaning. This section explores how teachers' experiences in the SAT programme have generated new perspectives on the diverse orders of education. The 'orders' in question include the phenomena of authority and discipline, of organization and institutional hygiene, and the setting of priorities. This multiple reading of 'order' does, I hope, allow fertile associations to be made within the narratives of the teachers interviewed.

As with section 2, this section is divided into 4 chapters. Chapter 8, *Setting the Course?*, explores the orders involved in determining what needs to be learnt and how to ensure that this is accomplished. These are the orders that teacher weave around their subjects of education in order to bring about and ensure learning. Chapter 9, *Shoot the Messenger?*, on the orders that are woven around teachers to ensure effective teaching. Chapter 10, *Mine is not to Reason Why. . . ?*, focuses on the internal, psychic structures that determine a teacher's identity, looking at those orders present in the fabric of their subjectivity that determine their relations to external orders, and their strategic perception of how to flourish or simply survive in the 'education game.' Each of these three chapters is divided into two sections which roughly correspond to pre-SAT problematizations of the field, and a post-SAT return to the same field for evidence of transformations and Deleuzean "lines of flight." Finally, Chapter 11 presents a discussion and conclusion of the implications of the evidence presented in the previous three chapters.

Chapter 8: Setting the Course?

For Foucault control and discipline are not unfortunate 'evils' of the education project; rather, discipline is a pedagogy in itself, perhaps *the* fundamental pedagogy of schooling, an "art of correct training":

The chief function of the disciplinary power is to "train," rather than to select or levy; or, no doubt, to train in order to levy and select all the more. It does not link forces together in order to reduce them; it seeks to bind them together in such a way as to multiply and use them. (Foucault, 1991, p.188)

Within the paradigm of disciplinary power, control is a primary responsibility of the teacher. Whether child centred or authoritarian, all 'meaningful' schooling necessarily involves the productive orientation of its subjects. There is ample evidence in the narratives that teachers are inevitably yet variably engaged in the practices of such discipline. Pre-SAT, Carla's authoritarianism ("Here there is order, full stop!") assumed that strict control was both *the message* and *the medium* by which content can be transmitted. But this order was not uncompromised, its edges fray into the reality of the classroom messily. Carla's tough line means, for example, that she was unable to *respond* when cracks of fragility manifest themselves on the smooth surface of things. She describes her dilemma when the girls in her dressmaking class would cry because of her harshness: "I would say, 'damn'. I felt that if I was to soften then I would lose my authority." This means a student's vulnerability not only interrupts the tone of the class, it also threatens to interrupt her projection of identity, and obliges her to interrupt her own spontaneous reaction which we can presume would be to 'soften'. This softening would have necessarily involved her 'changing course' in the lesson, and changing the course of her ongoing identity construction. The interruption of her first impulse represents a refusal to allow the situation to develop through its own gravity; rather, the pressure of an erupted sadness is calculated against the caution inherent in a 'loss of face' and a possible descent into the unknown. It is significant that Carla's recognition of fragility took the form of an internal expletive, as her more generous impulse was turned back on itself as private irritation.

Though we have to read between the lines, and assume an impulse to comfort the girl, if we are prepared to make this leap then the scene provides a graphic illustration of what Fritz Perls identified as the central issue of neurosis; self-interruption and the loss of contact with the emergent present that this engenders.

The neurotic is [...] a self-interrupter. All schools of psychotherapy take this fact into account. Freud, as a matter of fact, built his therapy around a recognition of this phenomenon. Of all the possible forms of self-interruption he chose a very decisive one, which he called the Censor ... [Unlike Freud, for me] what has to be tackled in therapy is not the censored material but the censoring itself, the form self-interruption takes. Again, we cannot work from the inside out, but only from the outside in. (Perls, 1973, p.69)

Perls' shift of critical attention, from interpretation to the observation of interruption, offers a psychological echo of Foucault's shift of critical attention from truth to technologies of power-knowledge. Interruption is a specific act, a technique, within intra-psychic relations of power, in turn connected to a multiplicity of events and objects in the external world. Just as in Foucault's critique of the subject of history, it is in the examination of the micro-physics of these power relations that the forces shaping the subject are revealed. Perls categorically states that:

What we have to do is deal with the *hows* of every interruption, rather than with the censor – which is Freud's postulated *why* of interruption [...] As he [*sic*] becomes more aware of the ways in which he interrupts himself, he will inevitably become more aware of what he is interrupting [...] by concentrating on the interruption *per se* – on the *hows* of it, not its *whys* – the patient comes to an awareness of the fact that he is interrupting himself, and becomes aware of what he is interrupting. He also becomes able to dissolve his interruptions and to live through and finish one unfinished experience. (Perls, 1973, pp.69-70)

Evidence seems to suggest, for example, that Carla interrupted herself through an enactment of irritation. What is it that she interrupted? She would seem to interrupt her own sensitivity, her own sense of responsibility to respond empathically to an 'outbreak' of emotion. It might be argued that she interrupted her own guilt at having provoked the situation with her harshness. And she interrupted the possibility of communicating 'authentically' with the affected student, or anyone else witnessing the event. Though Carla offers us a specific,

concrete moment of interruption, we might argue that the orders of schooling represent an entire project of interruption as it seeks to control and prioritize experience and behaviour. This effect of interruption would be true of all of the actors of the school, as a 'virtuous' chain of interruption (or command) is enacted. The desirable competences of teachers, for example, may themselves be seen as a form of interruption in which one set of behaviours is prioritized over another.

However, a culture that establishes a certain order, a certain surface to things by means of the interruption of all things that fall outside these parameters, should not only be seen as an 'effect' of an oppressive power as it is traditionally understood; psychoanalytically derived perspectives on the group (e.g. Bion, 1961; Freud, 1921) emphasize the innate tensions existing in the paradoxical nature of our experience of the group. On the one hand we want to belong, and on the other we fear total engulfment by the collective and a corresponding loss of self. Group and individual thinking is necessarily interrupted as these opposites establish an 'eternal' dialogue around the play of 'spontaneous' impulses circulating within the group. Britzman asserts that thinking in groups (and presumably perceiving, acting and feeling) is made difficult by these paradoxical pressures.

Carla's means of belonging to the group, and, indeed of creating the group in which she can belong, is an authoritarian domination of the group space. The cost of this group identity is the interruption of her tenderness and uncertainty. But there are other permutations along the continuum of authoritarianism-permissiveness. One example is Cecilia's problematic attempt to establish a progressive teaching ethos and practice.

I wasn't achieving anything. Sometimes I would need to get very authoritarian in order to deal with a situation which, had I checked it earlier, would not have required getting to that. So, above all, it was a burden that provoked a lot of anxiety. (Cecilia)

The idea of imposing a progressive regime upon herself brings to the foreground the paradox of Cecilia *controlling her need for control*:

I had an ideology that was that the teacher had to be liberal, anti-authoritarian, permissive, and this I imposed upon myself like a duty, I 'had to be' like that, and that didn't work. (Cecilia)

Cecilia's self-interruption is exercised over her authoritarian impulses. The juxtaposition of Carla and Cecilia's experience, would seem to confirm that the fundamental issue at stake is not the what or why of interruption, but the act of interruption itself.

As Carla and Cecilia's testimony shows there are many possible permutations in the establishment of priorities, order, control. Narrative evidence indicates that in Mexico the authoritarian mode, with its inherent problems and limitations, is predominant. Igor's pre-SAT authoritarian bias was typical of the position Fernando identifies as endemic in Mexican teachers. Unable to conceive of, or orchestrate, the communicative, goal centred classroom, and inheriting students with no habit of self-regulating productivity, teachers fall back on authoritarian domination of the space involving the closing down of horizontal relationships between students. By not delegating any responsibility for learning's *agency* to the student body, Igor positions himself at the zero-point of teaching and learning:

Basically it was me who had to fill all the time, without needing, or more like, without wanting them to speak. Instead, I would be presenting the whole time, manipulating things so that they would keep quiet. (Igor)

Time to fill, mouths to close, bodies to pacify; Igor's objective was to make himself into the only agent in the room. Here the order of schooling, as interpreted by Igor, approximates to Žižek's "*proletarian*" subject who is reduced to "subjectivity without substance, to the void of pure subjective potentiality whose actualization in the labour [education?] process equals its de-realization" (Žižek, 2011, p.313). Igor's obligation to control and colonize the subjectivity of the students, makes them dangerous objects, human bombs ticking with the threat of animation. The price of Igor's vigilance is mental and physical exhaustion, and though young he was already on the way to join many of his colleagues in the apathy of burn-out (Vandenberghe and Huberman, 1999). To elaborate on Blacker's (1998) hypothesis for the 'decadent intellectual', we might suggest Igor was succumbing to a danger equal and opposite to the "indignity of speaking for others" (Deleuze and Foucault, 1977, p.209); the indignity of *others talking through you*. Igor's dominance of his students was not the prerequisite of his own freedom; rather, it was the

prerequisite of *his own subordination* to that other prescriptive force in the classroom, the curriculum.

The ongoing furore over teacher quality, and the movement to establish professional competence as the determining factor of education's potential to build our citizenry, serves, among other things, to obscure the central role of curriculum in teaching and learning. Curriculum provides a meta-order for almost all that occurs in classrooms. Teachers' and students' relationship and their respective identities are mediated through curriculum's content, and it is through reference to this content that the school establishes itself as an "apparatus of uninterrupted examination" (Foucault, 1991, p.198). Whilst curriculum theory and development was not something teachers talked overtly about in the interviews, there is persistent evidence of disagreement concerning the quantity of knowledge prescribed by curriculum. The consensus among these teachers is that curriculum dictates 'too much, too soon' on the one hand (Carla's "Come on, hurry up!" captures perfectly the forced speed of schooling), and is redundant on the other (e.g. Araceli's comments on the accessibility of 'knowledge' through the internet). Schwab's (1956/1974) critique of the prioritizing of educational theory over practice claims overambitious curriculum agendas set themselves up against the rhythms of the group and/or are often irrelevant to the immediate situation – that is to the lives, relations and interests of the students. Curriculum's great conceit is the attempt to impose a universal order over the idiosyncratic orders and disorders of the local and contingent. This order is as much temporal as knowledge based. As Hull commented several years ago, even before the imposition of a very prescriptive national curriculum in England:

the temporal rhythms that engage the pupil will not be those of [his or her] own learning but the imposed pace of the objectivistically defined 'course', in which 'knowledge' means a predefined set of items of content each with its own time-value. (Hull 1988, p.131)

The prevailing experience of curriculum in the narratives is of the systematic violation of the relational spaces of the students and teachers. If for government the problem with the curriculum is teaching and learning, very often for these teachers the problem with teaching and learning is the curriculum. Curriculum is frequently delivered and received on a precipice of dissonance; by its very nature

it is not “emergent” (Deleuze, 1989). Traditionally, the domination of curriculum in the classroom has been sustained within the relations of power, and by the application of an array of punishments for inadequate teaching or learning. However, coercion is no longer an option for Cecilia, whose marginal students are impervious to threat. Her reality asserts itself violently over the educational theory and Cecilia is forced to negotiate between the demands of theory and real conditions of her real students.

The curriculum is the narratives’ elephant in the room. Igor struggled every year without success to cram his curriculum into the allotted time, turning teaching and learning into a mad dash against the clock. Dora imposed a regimental distribution of time in the classroom to make sure her students advance according to the targets of a progressive Mexican preschool curriculum. Lorena describes her passion to “get to the souls of the children” and to make certain things happen in the children, for their own good. What Lorena does ‘with passion’, in the intimacy of her classroom, schooling does imperiously, scientifically, on a massive scale. For Lorena, difficult knowledge is about retreating, de-colonizing; what she feels she needs to learn is that “if a child doesn’t want to finish [their work], well, so they don’t finish”. Fernando and Cecilia have learnt that *real* teaching requires them to defend their classroom and its relations from the overbearing pretensions and hubris of education. This, importantly, includes their own hubris. Choices must be made, priorities established and more modest limits set. These may often differ from the official order of things; Fernando and Cecilia have learnt the hard way that education’s aspirational nature and their own professional aspirations can be a bad business for all concerned.

If Lorena seems willing to learn a new order of humility, schooling appears often to be condemned to the perpetual repetition of its orders. Modern education is perhaps more remarkable for the persistence of historic demands and structures, for its familiarity, than for its newness (Moore, 2001). So what is it that schooling refuses to learn? And what does the resistance to such learning tell us about education? Such questions point toward the shadowy presence of difficult knowledge at heart of the education system. Does the school hide the knowledge of an order more difficult and unpalatable than the priorities of curriculum? Could

this knowledge refer to the relations between knowledge, power and subjectivity as expounded or 'unveiled' so forcefully by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*? The suspicion that something is being done to us at school which is other than its express purpose is, according to Bernfeld, ubiquitous, and rightly so given education's attachment to economy and to power (1973, p.68). Bernfeld's view was that this something being done is ultimately prescriptive, education is not giving us the tools to construct our freedom; "more than preservation or reproduction of what has been attained, it becomes conservation for the purpose of preventing anything new" (Bernfeld, 1973 p.83).

Setting the Course: Revisited

Were Bernfeld's suspicions to be true, we might conclude that teachers exist not to ensure a new social order in the future, but rather to prevent the future occurring other than as repetition of the present. Such opinions might be seen as conjecture, far removed from the daily concerns of teaching. But Carla's reflections concerning teachers who are "excessively rigid" and those who "are not rigid enough" is of relevance. Students need discipline, but they also need love. The question is how to get the balance right? Defining her own position, Carla is clear that she had erred toward rigidity; she recognizes she had been excessively ordered, frequently offensive, and even traumatizing. Post SAT, greater understanding of herself and others is now providing a foundation for shifting this default position ("I became tough through suffering. But now I am more sensitive. I feel that I understand people more ..."). She also observes in the interview that other people have commented on her transformation. For example, a colleague commented "Carla, you have changed ... you are more tolerant".

Carla sees, feels and comprehends herself in a new light. Her new point of balance is not only behavioural; it is perceptual, affective and conceptual. An examination of her narrative indicates that she is undergoing a complex reappraisal of sameness-difference in her inter-personal relations. However, she has not shifted along a horizontal axis toward the valuation of sameness as opposed to difference, nor *vice versa*. Rather, the shift seems to have occurred on a vertical axis between

the poles of intensity/proximity and lassitude/distance. It appears that Carla ignored sameness *and* difference, and that her changing perception involves an increasing awareness of both. Carla's new order is charged with intensity and proximity whereas her old order had been cold, inert and distant.

With regard to *sameness*, Carla's default teaching style – authoritarian, institutional and rigid – had little to do with any pedagogic theory; rather, it originated in a fear of ridicule. Her struggle has been to assure *sameness* (acceptability) by not committing mistakes and striving for rigorous and unimpeachable perfection. This principle underscored many of her attitudes, feelings, beliefs, and behaviours. During the SAT, however, she was able to study and observe other modes of existence (e.g. personality types), both theoretically and in the flesh. Seeing other participants with different attitudes to error, and sometimes unashamedly displaying their fallibility, Carla was able to find comfort and to collapse a little into this shared humanity ("Why should *I* be scared of mistakes if *we are all the same?*").

It seems obvious to many that to be human is to err, but for Carla this was a 'truth' from which she felt she had been excluded, or from which she had excluded herself. The experience of the commonality of error gives Carla a greater freedom; she can relax the controls, joke, and laugh at herself with her students. Undetermined outcomes become more acceptable and a multiplicity of ways to share the space of learning makes itself apparent. She has loosened the chains that tied her to an institutional paradigm of determining how one 'gets on with the work of education'. She stops the class to tell stories, organizes parties with dancing, singing, and recitals. She even tried to introduce a meditation type exercise.

With regard to *difference*, Carla battled the world on the basis that she "thought that everyone should be the same" as her. She expected students to have the same ordered capacity for work and this tendency to project is in keeping with Sigmund Freud's observation that "without any special reflection we attribute to everyone else our own constitution and therefore consciousness as well" (Freud in Britzman, 1998, p.7). According to Britzman, only special reflection, a straining of vision and

perspective, permits the integration of “the fragility of understanding others and distrust[s] the wish for a continuity and sameness that attributes to others the same state of mind” (ibid.). The SAT provided Carla with this possibility of dis-identification. She was able to re-calibrate her perception of otherness and difference, not as a ‘failure’ to comply to (her) standards, but as an inevitable expression of our humanity. Not all of her students will have the same hands for dressmaking as she does, nor the same obsessive dedication (“I realize now that, really, I am not the only one, but, yes, we are each unique in our own way”). Here it would be the recognition of her singularity, rather than her correctness, that justifies her belonging among her fellow humans, each unique.

If this is so, Carla’s transformation signifies a death; as Gilles Deleuze maintains:

[...] once one steps outside what’s been thought before, once one ventures outside what’s familiar and reassuring, once one has to invent new concepts for unknown lands, then methods and moral systems break down and thinking becomes, as Foucault puts it, a “perilous act”, a violence, whose first victim is oneself. (1995, p.103)

There is every sign Carla is happy with her Deleuzian “deterritorialization”. Semetsky interprets the Deleuze’s concept of deterritorialization as “an event of leaving the symbolic home and cutting ties with the familiar territory, which thus leads to one’s uprooting” (2006, p.95). “Uprooting”, however, does not capture the sense of arrival in these narratives. Yes, something has been left behind, but only because something else has been found. Deterritorialization in this sense involves a colonization of something new, desirable, desired, or the re-colonization of a previously lost territory. The journey of these “nomadic subjects” (ibid., pp.91-104) is made possible by a movement toward rather than an expulsion from. It is not that they have become outside (uprooted) but have known the possibility of being *inside* something else (re-rooted). Deleuze uses the rhizome metaphor to capture the form subjectivity takes. Rhizome growth involves a shifting of the centre of gravity from one point to another, a starfish-like creeping towards new coordinates on the plane of existence and “rhythmic fluctuations between disequilibria and restorations of equilibrium at a new level” (Semetsky, 2006, p.57).

In the case of Carla the new level at which she is re-establishing balance or equilibrium is consistent with a desire to be a good person – this remains a constant. However, her perception of what good is and how it might be attained has shifted. As well as a new order of intensity/closeness, Carla would seem to be establishing a new order for ‘goodness,’ for ‘virtue.’ The coordinates around which her sense of ‘goodness’ is regrouping, is captured in her references to the suffering of others and in her reaction to that suffering. For it is in relation to suffering that we see sameness and difference come together most powerfully in a new constellation of thought, feeling and action. This is exemplified by the following extract:

Also, now with the facial expressions of the girls and other things, I realize sometimes that they are suffering. And sometimes just with a pat on the back or a word you say to them and they burst into tears. And now I am more careful about saying what I have to say. So now, with what I took from the SAT and what I’ve studied, if you could say that: ‘Do you want to talk? Can I help you with something? Or do you just want to cry? Cry? You can do what you feel like. Come. Sit down here for a bit. Do you want a cup of tea?’ [...] And if the girl begins to talk, well, we talk. And I say ‘Look, my point of view is this. Not that you have to do that’. Before it was always ‘Why don’t you do this or that? You have to. You must this. You must that!’ Not now. ‘My point of view is this, what do you think? How can it be solved? And talking and talking the two of us look for a solution. (Carla)

This is not only a touching scene; it importantly reveals how Carla is redefining herself around suffering. Her transition involves enacting a new equilibrium between sameness and difference, palpable in her capacity to involve herself in the other empathically whilst at the same time not confusing herself with the girl. Briefly, they occupy the same problem, they hold the same map, but Carla refrains from presuming she is looking and talking from the same place as her student. Talking and talking they look for a solution between them. ‘Goodness’, however, is no longer conflated with the practical utility of forcing resolutions; rather, it is the ‘goodness’ of being there to listen and to converse. Imagining the scene, one might confer with Dewey in concluding that such communication is an act of wonder:

[O]f all affairs, communication is the most wonderful [...] When communication occurs, all natural events are subject to reconsideration and revision: they are re-adapted to meet the

requirements of conversation, whether it be public discourse or that preliminary discourse termed thinking. (Dewey, 1925/1958, p.166)

Carla's narrative contains many indications that she is discovering a new order of communication in the classroom, a communication in which an open-ended fluidity is replacing the anxiety for 'correctness,' certitude and closure. This is an order which hints at a greater freedom and creativity in the relations of teaching and learning between Carla and her students.

Foucault, Nietzsche, and Naranjo are all concerned with the recognition of the limits encountered by subjectivity, and the consequent need for creative practices of freedom amid an array of forces operating upon the subject from within and without. The (dis)order of creativity is a theme already noted in Conrado's determination to establishing a creative freedom in his practice (see *Questions of Purpose*). Conrado considers that this creativity must be uncovered, rather than incorporated; it is sensed as already being his. This theme of unfolding creativity is found in other narratives. Notably, Nieves at the age of 47 has taken up the cello and started painting. Paralysed in front of the blank canvas she becomes aware of her fear of this creative (im)possibility. It is a block, an interruption, she senses might have been of some use to her (something correctly learned at some point in her history), but knows that she must "let go" of this old learning if she is to escape a frustrating tentativeness. Though creativity is unfamiliar and difficult, she has known its power and reach ("I discovered myself painting full of energy and pleasure, and connected to ... plenitude"). Through such watershed moments she knows that another way of being in the world exists, a way that she hopes could inform her whole life, including her professional identity.

Whilst it is obvious that Nieves is still elaborating this part of her psycho-emotional journey, she has already concluded that creativity is central to her freedom and even to a Nietzschean *nobility*. She feels that occupying creativity would give her "the sensation of being 'the best'". Not an arrogant, comparative 'best', but the 'best' of a self-referential satisfaction, of her "it is mine" and "it is being me". No longer would she totally be subjected by the Foucauldian gaze (1991, pp.206-213); she "wouldn't want so much to be likeable" nor to "please the student so much", she would not be always lost in an anxious, dependent identification with how others

see her; rather the new order of creativity promises the possibility of making something new, something previously inexistent. These concepts appear to be crystallizing for her as a knowledge experienced but not yet fully elaborated:

How would I describe it? [...] this is really important [...] how do men look at me? How *I don't know what*? How do I position myself before them? How do I position myself before the students [...] You always have to be aware [...] I am always in relation to someone or something. That is where I was [...] Now it is okay. The important thing was *that*, and that changes things a lot. It changes your place, it changes [...] I don't know, I don't know [...] it is difficult for me to explain. (Nieves)

It is not surprising that Nieves finds this difficult to explain. She is taking her first steps in a new territory. However, she becomes clearer when describing the all too familiar place she is trying to leave behind: "I had killed off a kind of strength ... that of '*I already am*'". In contrast, Nieves is now rediscovering strength in *feeling* one's existence as the power necessary for being creatively alive. It is, she concludes, "the power of *me*". And it is this 'power of me' that now interests her. Whilst she has enjoyed the formal power associated with being head of a school, she is now captivated by this other power, and anxious to explore how its exercise might extend through the multiplicity of her intra- and inter-personal relations. What she expects and hopes to generate and communicate is a "fluidity" in which the most technical and most laborious things become easy.

As with Conrado and Cecilia, Nieves is exploring a new, possibly transgressive order or priority that might hold or frame the dominant orders of the classroom and of teaching, making them easier, less overbearing. If professional identity is always bearing down upon the teacher as normative - creating anxieties, submissions, confusion, conflicts, judgements, exclusions - the cultivation of an identity of *presence*, of felt knowledge of *I am*, stands as a neutralizing force against all that would require us not so much *to be* and thus *to do*, but rather *to do* (a certain way) and thus *to be*. Nieves' addition of *already* to the statement *I am*, (as in "I already am") is critical. It makes clear that being and having value are not future projections of a status or style to be attained, a skill to be acquired, a competence to come. There is no longer anywhere to get to. And at the same time everywhere must be visited and included in this 'changed place'. If the journey of development and its learning begins in the knowledge of dependence, it can only come to

maturity through the knowledge of independence. As Blake *et al.* comment in reference to Ralph Waldo Emerson's description of self-perfection: "One must insist on oneself, and not imitate. As Emerson puts it: 'He must greatly listen to himself, withdrawing himself from all the accents of other men's devotion'" (2000, p.157).

The (re)discovery of this order of self-reference and its creative power appears throughout the narratives. It is endemic to teachers' experiences in and around the SAT programme. Igor stumbles upon his '*me*' in a pedagogical 'epiphany'. Unlike Conrado, Nieves or Cecilia, Igor seems to have been struck by a 'bolt from the blue' in the act of teaching. On returning from the first retreat of the SAT programme, something new occurs:

The first thing that I did was to look them in the eyes - I didn't know what was happening to me! - to identify the trust that they might have in me, and this gave me a great sense of security, and I shook them out of the routine and customs we had been working under. And from then on I began to see my changes, almost automatically. I had brought a work plan, and I interrupted that plan a little, and we began to talk. (Ivan)

This *me* to be trusted would not appear to be the *doer* of professional competency; rather, it is the *doer* who looks his students in the eyes. It seems to be a seminal event in Igor's teaching career. Once more, there is a sense that nascent possibilities within Igor had been waiting for this moment. This innocuous arrival point is also a point of departure for all concerned. Igor describes an almost spontaneous 'conversion', from formulaic teaching to a life serving affirmation of himself as teacher in relationship with the 'other'. The philosophical and moral relevance of such a conversion can be seen in Blake *et al.*'s critique of the deadening effect of modern education's nihilism: "What we want, as [Jean-François] Lyotard has it, what we want is intensity. With something like electric illumination, the teacher must conduct intensities" (Blake *et. al.*, 2000, p. 62). And, quoting Lyotard: "To understand, to be intelligent, is not our overriding passion. We hope rather to be set in motion. Consequently our passion would sooner be the dance, as Nietzsche wanted . . ." (ibid.). There is an echo of Carla's testimony in Igor's conversion to the casual intensity of conversation. Both have arrived at this place of meeting, of dialogue, of dialectic. It is a long way from the orders of curriculum or of authoritarian unilateralism, in which conversation may be

permitted if it is seen to conform to education's demand "that everyone get to the point" (Britzman, 1998, p.37). Conversation, conversely, *is* the point, even when it is intentioned as in Carla's attempt to talk through a problem with her student. Conversation represents a bringing together of the message and the messenger, what is said *and* the person who says it are of the same order of importance and are essential features of the conversation as a meandering river of agency and meaning, in which one learns about the world *and* about the other *and* about self-other relations. The reappearance of the (dis)order of conversation in the classroom perhaps provides us with an echo of the origins of Western education such as the Socratic debate, in which the engagement of conversational devices is at the heart of pedagogy and the pedagogic relationship.

Chapter 9: Shooting the Messenger?

If conversation is an order to which teachers might aspire, a place of grace, of respite, of easeful intentioned and unintentioned learning, this order has not been readily accessible to the teachers in this study. In the dominant discourses of teacher identity and education there exists a tendency for message to colonize the messenger, just as Igor had become a conduit of curriculum. This colonized teacher, this conduit of curriculum rather than Lyotard's "conduct[or] of intensities" (op.cit.), represents a conflation of the message and the messenger, an operation by which the messenger is increasingly made responsible for the successes and failures of education's multiple messages. Even in the most marginal of educational spaces, a teacher such as Irene demonstrates that she was highly susceptible to the technologies of power and self that transect teacher identity. Facing a class full unmotivated students with no interest in the official curriculum, she confronted also an internalized demand to fulfil what was expected of her: "it was difficult for me to leave behind the demand that I had to teach what they'd said I had to teach. I had a boss, right?" Or, in a similar vein:

I was always worried about what my superiors were going to say about me. Like, what would they say? Is she or isn't she achieving the established objectives? [...] It provoked a lot of tension, being in a situation in which you see yourself as impotent and you say: 'How am I going to do it?' (Irene)

She has been assigned the responsibility to make certain things happen, to deliver the message, but does not feel either fully able to do so or free to do something else.

Julia, likewise, explains that she and many other people working at her university sustain situations that are systemically untenable. The dominant climate stressing competence (Moore, 2004) means Julia lives these impossible situations as if their success or failure were her responsibility. Julia, and her colleagues, have assumed responsibility for questionable systemic 'orders' through the discourse and climate of professional competence. The personal cost of this is:

(...) a lot of tension, of course, because it is making out as if everything depended on me. Right? Lots of feelings of guilt, of not being up to it, lots of demands on myself . . . lots of effort in preparing things [for class] that at the end of the day weren't so dependent on me. (Julia)

There are echoes here of the saviour discourse, a sense that difficult circumstances can and should be turned round by individual effort. However, motivation in assuming this responsibility differs: Araceli, Cecilia and Yvete were political 'radicals' with a bellicose idealism, whilst Julia's concern was the perfection of her professional image in alignment with the priorities of the *status quo*. Julia's utopia was the utopia of the institutional agenda; she had aligned herself "completely" because "she never questioned anything" regarding the "implicit or explicit messages of the institution". Julia's 'not waving but drowning' account of her troubles echoes Fernando's *Catch 22* for teachers – damned if you align yourself with the institution, damned if you don't. It is as if, she says, she had to hide something from the institution. Perhaps it is her fallibility she must hide. And perhaps also her rebellious desire to *redefine* 'to what' and 'for whom' she is responsible.

If Julia was evidently concerned to shore up her image as a competent professional, such efforts are often sabotaged by circumstances, thus provoking an apparent collapse. Identity slippage is palpable at many points in the narratives of this study. However, at this point, in a small but illustrative divergence from the interview data, I would like, following Jaramillo (2010), to consider a particularly eloquent fictionalized case of 'identity trouble' in the classroom taken from the French film *Entre les murs* (*The Class*). The film is based on a autobiographical novel by Francois Bégaudeau, author and former teacher in a tough multi-ethnic school in a Parisian *banlieu*. Bégaudeau is passionate about his subject, French language and literature, and troubled by the conflicts in the classroom that threaten to eclipse the subject matter. A summary of the film is as follows:

The trickiest member of the class is Souleymane (Frank Keiter), a boy from Mali with family problems and a temper. Souleymane cheekily tells François that he has heard the teacher "likes men" – and insolently says that this is not his own accusation, just something he has heard. Happily, François finds a way to get through to Souleymane: he turns out to take great photos of his family on his mobile phone and François gets him to use these pictures in an autobiographical class

project. It is a euphoric breakthrough. But things turn very sour when two girls are allowed to sit in on a staff discussion about standards and behaviour and gleefully report back some disobliging remarks to Souleymane, who is deeply angry and hurt after his class-project triumph, with no vocabulary to express his sense of betrayal. François himself is coldly furious at the girls' indiscretion and accuses them in class of behaving like "pétasses" – "skanks" – crucially losing his cool and compromising his authority. That crude insult ignites a violent row which becomes toxic when François fails to mention the "skanks" provocation in his official report. When challenged, François airily insists he was not saying they were "skanks," merely that they were behaving as such – the same species of dishonest sophistry that Souleymane used with his "gay" jibe. (Bradshaw in Jaramillo, 2010, p.49)

Clearly the film presents us with a world of complex personal and institutional relationships shot through with a shifting positioning of power. Jaramillo concludes that Bégaudeau "exposes one of the essences of being human, of being a contradictory and flawed professional" (Ibid.). This flawed being is unequal to the disparate demands from without and within, and under such pressures one could say that a 'fall' or slippage is inevitable. Obviously, many forces have been at work upon and within Bégaudeau in the unfolding of this scenario. Many surfaces to his teacherly identity are visible as he engages with a class of marginalized urban students, and at different points in the story, and sometimes simultaneously, he is 'progressive', 'charismatic', 'competent', 'communicative', 'reflective' (after Moore, 2004). But if we get a sense of Bégaudeau's smooth surfaces – an essentially good man who is doing his best in difficult circumstances – we critically are missing access to his underlying motivations in the interpretation of his actions, his presence. What is it he is hoping to achieve (for himself)? What is it that he is hoping to avoid? In what way do these surfaces connect to his desire? Is it desire that holds together and makes sense of the apparent contradictions of his personal and professional identity? We could conjecture that it is Bégaudeau's desire for connection that ties together his apparent contradictions: he wants to belong everywhere simultaneously and has possibly not understood the deep incompatibility between French 'high culture', institutional processes and relations, and the loyalties required in appealing to the immigrant youth culture. Bégaudeau attempts to span these worlds, to be the messenger, and in so doing is tragically overstretched and undone. Consistent with this reading of the primacy of desire in

the glue that holds together his identity collage is the degree to which his teacherly identity collapses once 'connection' is usurped by conflict. Threatened by 'rejection' Bégaudeau goes into free fall and lashes out violently at the 'enemy'. The teacher identities in service to 'connection' are not available to him in the negotiation of conflict, and under the pressure of collapse, strange and ugly utterances fly from what we presume to be an alter ego or from the subconscious. The progressive Bégaudeau is, it seems, inhabited by monsters, and as the first monster raises its head and goes public, an explosion of implicit questions fills the classroom. Who is this man really? What does he stand for? What is he doing here? What does he want/desire? What are we to him? Who is he to us? What can we believe that he believes? And so on. All of these questions he could now equally ask himself. And whereas previously it might have seemed strange to us that he should ask such questions of himself, now it would appear not only justified but also necessary. Indeed, a reflexive turn (Moore, 2004) would seem to be the only viable or 'decent' recourse if he is to decipher what has occurred and establish his degree of responsibility within the bigger picture.

Bégaudeau has been revealed as blind to himself, and capable of the same dishonesties that he would previously have felt himself superior to and incapable of. But Bégaudeau cannot be easily described as the villain of this 'morality tale', rather he is the chief protagonist within a culture of blindness in which most people do and say things without full access to the immanent/emergent reality of the other or of themselves. This is a world that would seem to be crying out for a Butlerian ethics in which the unknowability of myself provides a key to 'understanding' the other. As Butler says: "precisely my own opacity to myself occasions my capacity to confer a certain kind of recognition on others. It would be, perhaps, an ethics based on our shared, invariable, and partial blindness about ourselves' (Butler, 2005, p.41). A chastened Bégaudeau at the end of the film would probably no longer be surprised that two young women attending a meeting would speak about its contents outside of that meeting. He would be more aware of the opacity of human behaviour and the need to see into desire in order to more fully interpret and predict intra- and inter-personal events. Such an ethics, after Foucault, would point to the need to work on the self, a care of the self that would include combating our

lack of self-knowledge as a necessary social and political practice. The felt and deep recognition of this individual and collective blindness can only occur where something has been seen that previously was not seen. We must know that we do not know ourselves in part as we surprise ourselves, but also in part as we come to know ourselves, as we shine a light into the darkness.

Entre les murs would seem to imply that light will be shone on us whether we like it or not, whether it is our intention or not. The messenger *will be interrogated*, and maybe they will succumb to an order that is not their own. As Britzman (1994, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2009) implies, the classroom is a stage whose dramatic action will almost inevitably pull at all that holds our carefully constructed teacher identities together, an external (dis)order taunting and harrying our would-be internal orders, and *vice versa*. Whilst Bégaudeau's teacherly identity had many surfaces and could be described as 'rich', 'nuanced', 'complex' it can also be said that this identity was at the service of a simplifying principle. Bégaudeau wants to make things nice, to reform, to smooth out the rough edges, to prettify, to turn a young rebel into a functioning [i.e. productive] member of society. He presumed an order in the world, a code of conduct (his own included), that was cruelly exposed as fantasy. Most importantly, this simplifying principle is exploded not by harsh social realities, or by students' resistance, but by his own 'ugliness'. His pedagogy falls foul of the limitations of his psycho-emotional transparency and integrity. His intention to set the world straight, one student at a time, is brought low by his own chaos. What this 'communicative' teacher finally communicates is that he is not what he appears: i.e. he communicates the very thing that he most wants to hide, the illusion of his own order. It is this illusion that might be what students, especially 'problem' students, most want to expose, to 'know'. Is the students' own 'hidden curriculum' and sinister delight to break through a teacher's identity discourse to reveal its soft underbelly?

It is a commonplace that one learns when one teaches. However, this learning usually has little to do with 'knowledge' and much to do with 'identity'. A difficult class 'teaches' the teacher the limits of their competency discourse, or 'charisma' is punctured by an acerbic and prescient comment from a knowing student. In the

case of *Entre les murs*, Bégaudeau has suddenly become unknown to himself. He is in uncharted territory and will need to find the personal/discursive resources to proceed from his exploded/naked position. It is a most dreadful wreckage, and most poignant opportunity. There is both more *and* less to him than has been previously revealed or manifest. He has become Foucauldian Man in the sense that he has blindly stumbled on his own error, his own limitation and fragility. Bégaudeau has tumbled from success to failure. Such a threat is ever-present in the narratives of this study, not only as the possible identity meltdown experienced by Bégaudeau, but in the myriad accumulation of disconcerting details that make up Connolly's "fugitive difference" (1991, p.120) between concept and reality. Carla makes a much feared mistake on the blackboard and her 'perfect' identity dissolves among the mocking laughter of her students, and explodes in her vengeful recriminations. Rebeca surprises herself when she lapses suddenly from her purposeful attitude of respect and tolerance, using her position to belittle a difficult student in front of the class. Julia is haunted by the ghost of past, present and future failure. Fernando recognizes the errors of imposition and hubris committed when acting as head teacher.

Whilst teaching identities have perhaps always been vulnerable to the complex dynamics of school life, they have also increasingly become the target of a critical political and systemic scrutiny. The prevailing mood in educational reform is to point the finger at a failing body of teachers (Moore, 2012). From the optic of teacher quality discourse, if education is failing, the argument goes, teachers must be responsible for this failure. Ironically, or perhaps as a perverse payback for teachers' complicity in demarcating success and failure for their students, it is a new focus upon these same student results that is now providing the means to examine teacher performance and to determine success or failure, no longer just of the student, but of the teacher also. Foucault's description of the school's "apparatus of uninterrupted examination" reveals the how the technology of examination is used by the teacher

to transform his [sic] pupils into a whole field of knowledge [...] examination in the school was a constant exchanger of knowledge; it guaranteed the movement of knowledge from the teacher to the pupil,

but it extracted from the pupil a knowledge destined and reserved for the teacher. (Foucault, 1991, p.198)

This remains true today, but this “exchanger of knowledge”, in a final Foucauldian twist, has now engulfed the teacher themselves. The onset of the performativity culture in teaching means that this “field of knowledge” about students has become a “field of knowledge” about teachers. Student grades no longer draw the line at holding students “in a mechanism of objectification” (ibid. p.199), they are now taken to provide a knowledge of the teacher also, and of the training and management of teachers. By such means, teachers have been made responsible for the curriculum and become subjected to its difficult knowledge (Moore, 2001, 2004). By such means, we might conclude, the new neo-liberal order in schools has put the teacher, education’s messenger, up against the wall.

Shooting the Messenger: Revisited

If these teachers lined up against the wall were to be given one last wish, what might that be? Might it be to communicate their experience to their accusers, to talk long and hard about their first-hand knowledge of teaching and learning? Might it be the wish to dissolve the uncertainties and frailties of their identity in Dewey’s wondrous acts of communication? Unfortunately, the existence of the unconscious and of our will to ignorance (Bion, 1961) implies, ironically, that communication as an act of wonder can never be assumed as the default experience of teachers. However, where real communication does occur, “reconsideration and revision” (Dewey, 1925/1958, p.166) naturally ensue. This wondrous communication would constitute itself as a new order of being, a new order of experience. Even if such communication is difficult, Naranjo (2000) insists that to be ‘miraculously’ *within* actuality is the principal requirement that will permit learning for full and healthy maturation. As Whitehead says, “the present contains all that there is” (Whitehead, 1929/Cahn, 1997, p.263). This high value of actuality, transposed into educational context can be found Whitehead’s golden rule:

Whatever interest attaches to your subject-matter must be evoked in the here and now; whatever powers you are strengthening in the pupil,

must be exercised in the here and now; whatever possibilities of mental life your teaching should impart, must be exhibited here and now. This is the golden rule of education, and a very difficult rule to follow. (Whitehead, 1929/Cahn, 1997, p.265)

This, as Whitehead indicates, is a heavy and difficult-to-assume responsibility for teachers. But the narrative evidence does reveal approximations to a new order of existence in a radical *teaching present*. Fernando is revealing on the subject of the difficult knowledge of actuality, and the learning that might occur in communication between subject (teacher) and object (school life):

What I have learnt [...] is that [reflexivity] doesn't depend totally on oneself, but rather you have to let yourself run with experience, live, and catch yourself out in relation to life. (Fernando)

Fernando comes up against himself at the moment he comes into contact with life and attempts to negotiate what occurs outside and inside. How is Fernando to understand himself, his environment, and the interplay of actions that occur there? The obtuse multiplicity of 'reality' looms before us not so much as communication but as information overload, or foreign languages, or noises (voices) we cannot be sure are language. As Fernando states, our thought is continually caught out *and* made possible by life. And as Dewey observed:

To 'learn from experience' is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy and suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions, doing becomes a trying; an experiment with the world ...; the undergoing becomes instruction – discovery of the connection of things. (1916/1924, p.164)

How do we learn to talk the talk of emotion and to walk the walk of awareness? How might the experimental discovery of emerging connections overcome the temptation to forge the world in our own image? If teachers experience their professional identity as fragile and hollowed out, permanently provoked by failure, how can this experience be reconfigured as complete, relevant and resistant? If movement is to be made in any of these directions, the cultivation of awareness would seem to be the baseline or medium by which we might approach a non-philosophical opening to the world, a transformative practice that sustains and celebrates the "discovery of the connection of things" unfolding inside and outside. Britzman says the following regarding this challenge:

How is it possible for education as a discourse and as a practice, as an institution and as an experience, to listen to its own exclusions, repressions, and silences? What could education be like if its interest began with Winnicott's notion of "making elbow room for the experience of concern"? (1998, p.59)

Winnicott's "concern" is reminiscent of Žižek's necessary "terror of ourselves" (op.cit., see *Questions of Purpose*). Such a concern, or terror, undermines the neutrality of our 'natural' orders, brings danger to surfaces that had appeared innocuous. Like the background music of a horror film, it renders the most ordinary act of going down some stairs into a matter of life or death. Based on the narrative evidence, it would seem that the SAT programme generates an ongoing concern in the teachers, and consolidates an interest in the excluded, repressed, and silenced. The narratives are full of new perceptions, new communications, new attentions, new interpretations and new feelings. Post-SAT, for example, Lorena is attempting to redistribute her attention from emotion to cognition. She has 'seen' her seduction of authority ("when things don't go the way I want"), and 'seen' her seduction of the children ("I like *all* the children to love me"). She has reluctantly 'connected' with her sadness and her need for others, her dependency that spilled over into a tendency to control. She has *perceived* her use of *perception* to control and manipulate ("when I am with the students I am very aware of what is happening"). And she has seen how fear of rejection and disapproval prevent her from innovating more in her teaching. Perhaps, most importantly, she is questioning the 'rightness' of her passionate engagement with the children ("when I throw myself in with fire, I stand in the way of everyone, and that is what I do not want").

Lorena has begun this slow acknowledgement of her own implication in education's "interference" in the child (Britzman, 1998). Post-SAT, she faces the difficult knowledge of not knowing how much to demand, of herself, of her students, or when or how. She acknowledges the existence of a sadness; the sadness

of not knowing, of not knowing. What do I do now? What now? That is what is waiting for me next term. Who am I now? It is the same thing as the sadness because who I am is [the same as] what I do. How I act with the children, how I act with everyone. I can really see that I am not that,

and don't want to be that, and [yet] I don't know how to do it any other way, because I have to learn, I have to learn such a lot. (Lorena)

This admission of impotence is hugely significant. Lorena is wrestling with a communication of knowledge from that other educational discourse whose origins are psychoanalysis. This knowledge would have her comprehend that her "infantile strategies of attempting to rescue or secure the love one wants from another do not go away, but are instead elaborated throughout a life" (Britzman, 1998, p.34). Such a realization could provide a reason to admit defeat in the project of maturation. If Lorena is to become equal to the event of her own learning, if she is to use learning to escape learning, then she must set in motion a line of flight from a territory dominated by the early fear of losing the other's love (Naranjo, 1994; Fenichel, 1954), to a territory energized by "the fear of losing self-respect" (Bettelheim, 1979).

Britzman comments that the "paradox is that self-respect can be made only from relations with others [...] in that uncertain quest for freedom" (1998, p.43). Lorena's paralysis before her students, her new-found caution, is both the recognition of a sense of shame-concern-terror in catching herself out as invasive, dependent, manipulative, and of the difficult knowledge that her desired freedom cannot be easily separated from the form her relations take with these students. Such knowledge renders her old orders uncomfortable and therefore inoperable, but does not defeat Lorena herself; rather, she perceives (and welcomes) the beginning of a new struggle to become equal to the challenge of the primacy of inter-connectedness. Despite acknowledging the level of autonomy available to teachers in state schools, she was, at the time of the interview, unfortunately still unsure if the school system, with its administrative imperatives, was a place where she could legitimately pursue this struggle.

Lorena, very new to teaching, is just beginning to weigh up the possibility of new directions in her practice, including leaving and not returning. Igor, on the other hand, is obviously fully committed to his teaching identity and to the transformation of this identity *in situ*. Post-SAT, things immediately begin to change in Igor's classroom; he reorganizes the physical space, begins student self-assessment, prioritizes and edits curriculum content, communicates his insecurity

on particular topics, relaxes the divide between the personal and professional, and opens himself up to feedback from the students on how he is doing. These are highly visible and multi-dimensional changes in practice, but he would appear to ascribe to them a common root within the teacher-student relationship:

I told them that I wanted to look them in the eyes, and that I don't have anything to hide from them. That they can see me, and examine me, and let's move forward, nothing will happen. What is more, things *do* happen - there is trust. And now that you mention looking them in the eyes, I feel that I have begun to respect them more, respect them as human beings. (Ivan)

Trust and respect provide a *transformative medium* in which Igor permits himself to put experiment in motion. Trust sustains his disruption of the *status quo*, and enables Igor to become a Lyotardian "conduct[or] of intensities". By privileging an intensity of trust, fear of fallibility and of the limits of control are postponed ("Before I went to SAT I had a great fear of that, because everything was like really ordered, because I was frightened of chaos, disorder ..."). Letting go of the established order did not bring chaos, but "fluidity"; the discovery that he and his students have "something in common to work with, something that will take us somewhere productive or positive". That something Igor calls "love", and this move echoes Deleuze's "'I love'... instead of 'I judge'" (Deleuze, 1989, p.141). Daniel Siegel also makes the connection between trust and love: "trust is a letting go, a willingness to rely on others for connection, comfort, and protection [...] a state of receptivity akin to [...] the] notion of love without fear" (2010 p.74).

Igor and his students attempt to set trust ("love without fear") in motion around teaching and learning. Two fields of difficult knowledge meet in this attempt, one illuminating the other through an admission that both teacher and student are emotional beings. This means that participation in classroom relationships and learning can be framed by an emotional reality - not only through the 'intensity' of Igor admitting to the class that he is not in a good mood, or receiving critical feedback from them, but also, for example, through the use of films to explore certain subjects in a way that permits him to "have them within the subject, and also in a human way", a way that he feels "strengthens the heart". It is this emotional connection that sustains the stuff of learning, the communication,

exchange and assimilation of knowledge. Whereas before this 'medium' had taken second place with respect to content, Igor appears to have brought 'form' into the foreground, instead of and beyond content.

Igor is obviously taking risks. He has put aside the concrete polarity of authoritarian practice to search for a moral authority he calls "wisdom". Having set the classroom in motion, he must trust he will be able to sustain this intensity, and sustain also his possible collapse. Igor has reconfigured the confrontational alignment of forces that Megan Boler identifies in the classroom:

What is [now] at stake [for Igor] is not only the ability to empathize with the very distant other, but to recognize oneself as implicated in the social forces that create the climate of obstacles that the other must confront. (1999, p.166)

In wanting, asking for, and offering trust Igor is declaring (to himself as much as the students) that he does not want to be part of Boler's "climate of obstacles", nor does he want the students to be an obstacle for his own attempt to flourish. Earlier Boler (ibid., p.150) has concluded that "students and educator are not and will never be equals or peers within the institutional setting" (see also Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, on the concept of "pedagogic authority" and "pedagogic action"). But this seems to be too categorical to be of any use to teachers, like Igor, who might be hoping to diminish the distances between curriculum, teacher and student. Igor's testimony points to a possible ground of parity which is trust.

Trust is not susceptible to power: In fact, the reverse is perhaps more true; where there is more (ab)use of power, trust is withdrawn. Students cannot be institutionally obliged to trust a teacher. Teachers cannot be institutionally obliged to trust themselves, a class, their head teacher, or the institution. Yet, as Igor has found out, where trust exists, obstacles appear to evaporate, things become easier, communication, creativity, and productivity seem to flow. And for this trust to be learnt, something genuine must be shared:

Learning is enabled by means of common engagement in shared, transversal communication [...] effecting genuine self-expression in what Deleuze would call a *haecceity* - thisness - of a particular here-and-now situation. (Semetsky, 2006, p.97)

The “thisness” of Igor’s situation may be rooted in his appreciation of common humanity. He has become aware of *sameness* as much of *difference*, his position in the class tempered by this difficult knowledge of seeing himself in them (“I have caught myself feeling very fond of them, not a parental fondness, but the fondness of friends, of being on the same path and enjoying the company of everyone”). Bearing in mind Foucault’s radical scepticism - “life ... is that which is capable of error” (2000e, p.476) – we could suggest that what this shared humanity hopes to be trusted with is its own fallibility. What we desire is that place where error is received, acknowledged, celebrated as necessary. It is in this recognition that we can become vital and creative, free. Eric Hoffer’s “There can be no real freedom without the freedom to fail” (1963) captures the radical spirit of failure and its challenge to the normalizing powers whose technologies of examination are identified by Foucault (op.cit.). When Igor allows students to apportion part of their own grade he invokes the honesty and reflexive capacity of his students. More importantly perhaps, he invokes a principle of humility comparable to Blacker’s (1998) “specific intellectual” in the acknowledgement of a limit to his omniscience and his de-colonization of students’ territory (“you yourself know your own process in depth, not those who are around externally”).

An ability to manage intensity with its heightened risks of failure is simultaneously the catalyst and fruit of trust. Exactly how Igor has learnt this possibility he does not say. However, the fact that his *relational turn* occurred immediately after his return from the SAT would indicate that a capacity and desire for “common engagement in shared, transversal communication ... effecting genuine self expression” (op.cit.) is probably *the* difficult knowledge elaborated by Igor during the SAT.

Other testimonies also suggest the SAT offers teachers opportunities to experience a new mode of relations for teaching and learning. Carla, for example, emphatically describes her experience as a student in the SAT as exemplary. It placed her own teaching practice, reliant on its “masks” and the hypocrisies of respectability, knowingness, and authority, into dramatic relief with the “unassuming sincerity” she perceived at the SAT:

In the SAT what I saw was sincerity, love. There wasn't anyone who addressed us rudely, no-one was forced to sit at a desk, when it's better to be comfortable. If you are left handed, don't they [normally] try and make you right handed. Or don't they [normally] discriminate because of the colour of your skin, when we are all equal. There in the SAT, they didn't treat me differently because I am 58 years old and not 20. They treated everyone the same, with the same patience, the same interest. (Carla)

Carla seems to imply this pedagogic "medium" favours trust. Such respect allows people to be "frank", "honest", and "discrete" in their participation. This *pedagogy of being together* made a deep impression on Carla, and was instrumental in re-positioning herself as a teacher: "seeing up close all that suffering and everything, well, it makes us grow. Anyway, for me they made me more sensitive". Once more, we might surmise that it is trust – in herself, in the other, in relationship, in difference, error, things as they are – that is allowing Carla to relax the iron grip of the enforcer, just as the fist of the oppressor might open out into the giving-receiving hand of the messenger.

Chapter 10: Mine is Not to Reason Why...?

Conrado's description of himself communicates that he was 'born to follow' ("one can adapt to anything, and I have been adapting"). His declaration that "it used to be the staff team first, and me in second place", demonstrates a concern to blend in and to collaborate. His early teaching experience was in a small and harmonious staff team where "everyone played their part". However, as is so often the case when looking more closely at the teachers in the study, Conrado is more complex than this. He was not simply a follower; he was a critical follower, a selective follower, an ideologue whose capacity to "adapt to anything" should not be confused with an unquestioning acceptance of the *status quo*. It appears that Conrado had aligned himself with certain (progressive) ideals embodied in the small, committed and communicative staff team at his first school. When serious division emerged around a teacher's strike, Conrado felt that he could no longer face the children and withdrew from teaching. More than a crisis of insecurity, Conrado's view is that this was a crisis of faith in which "the values that I believed in fell apart, so there was no point in carrying on climbing the mountain because the mountain no longer existed". Something about this disappearing 'solidity' of the mountain is reminiscent of Žižek's comments on the crisis of :

the "*totally mediatised subject*," fully immersed in virtual reality: while "spontaneously" he thinks that he is in direct contact with reality, his relationship to reality is in fact sustained by complex digital machinery. Recall Neo, the hero of *The Matrix*, who all of a sudden discovers that what he perceives as everyday reality is constructed and manipulated by a mega computer. (Žižek, 2011, p.314)

Conrado's rude awakening is more than a disappointment with the group. There are undertones of a thwarted utopian drive toward transparent, collaborative relations. His ability to stand in front of the students appears to have been partly dependent on being aligned within an exemplary collective movement which could be trusted to build a better future. His testimony provides yet more evidence of the "fugitive difference" (Connolly, 1991, p.120) between the map of the territory plotted from the perspective of the ideal, and the actual experience of crossing the

terrain. The map hints at ascents and descents, at boggy wetlands, but no-one breaks out in sweats just reading the map, or becomes physically weary. Conrado's voluntary retreat from teaching as a result of this crisis is a graphic illustration of the 'reality gap'. It sheds an interesting light on Connolly's "I am not exhausted by my identity", for whilst Connolly means to stress that there is 'stuff' within me that falls outside public/official identities, the word "exhausted" also has the meaning of 'tired' or 'drained'. Taking this slant of meaning into account, we could conclude that Conrado *is effectively exhausted by his teacher identity*, in as much as he appears unable to go on. Indeed, we may interpret Conrado's renunciation of teaching (he did not return for 7 years) as a manifestation of burn-out. The meeting of Conrado's internal (dis)order (identity/character) and the external (dis)order (structure/discourse) proved unsustainable. We can surmise that an exhaustion of identity, such as that suffered by Conrado on several occasions in his teaching career, bears some relation to a misalignment with 'reality' that causes the friction of resistance to the unfolding of events. As Britzman points out, Freud's early description of the ego claimed that, unlike the id, the ego "wears 'a cap of hearing' – on one side only ... it might be said to wear it awry" (Freud in Britzman, 1998, p.44). Britzman clarifies this strange statement by saying that the "ego hears selectively and through distortion". In other words, the ego actively creates reality, and what we see as 'reality' has its roots in an imaginative faculty or disposition of the 'ego' which would, for its own purposes, stamp a certain order on the world. As Naranjo points out, extinguishing such imagination has long been the target of spiritual endeavour. He illustrates his point with two quotes:

The essence of Nirvana consists simply in the extinction of the constructive activity of our imagination (Chandrakirti in Naranjo, 1974, p.153).

Sin being generally conceived as rebellion against the majesty of God, we have now to inquire after the source or instigator of this rebellion. In Rabbinic literature this influence is termed Yezer Hara. This is usually translated as "evil imagination" (Soloman Schechter quoted in Naranjo, 1974, p.154).

In the modern, western paradigm, which values so highly the activity of thought and its 'rich imaginings', such statements can seem strange. However, Naranjo

clarifies this problematized imagination, or the problem of illusion *versus* reality, by reference to madness:

If we look at the most acute forms of mental disease, there can hardly be any question as to the delusional quality of its manifestations. In the spheres of thinking and perception the psychotic patient displays a feeble grasp of reality. Delusional thinking, by no means exclusively psychotic, is also part of neurotic patterns or characterologic patterns. In neuroses, though, it is less obvious as it is implicit in feelings or behaviour rather than explicit in the form of thought disturbances [...] In fact all neurotic behaviour may be interpreted as stemming from misperceptions of reality, a reality wrapped in superimposed illusory threats. (Naranjo, 1974, p.154)

Foucault, in *Madness and Civilization*, analysed the history of our understanding of madness from the Middle Ages through to the Enlightenment, and so charted the genealogy of our modern clinical definitions and understandings. For the classical thinker, such as Erasmus, the delusional condition of humanity and its imposition of a false order on to experience is endemic to society, and a particular feature of being human, born into folly:

There is no madness other than in every man, because it is man that constitutes madness, thanks to the affect they have for themselves [...] the attachment to self is the first sign of madness; and such is the attachment that it causes man to accept error as truth, lies as reality, violence and ugliness as justice and beauty. (Foucault 2001, pp.44-45)

This is by no means to say that Conrado was 'mad', rather that we should not be surprised to find madness, understood as orders or degrees of delusion, within his world view. Moreover, his own world view should not, perhaps, be separated from the norms of the social environment in which he was operating. Conrado's dream of unity, cooperation and collective action was a shared socio-political ideal, not his own invention. Indeed, to a lesser or greater extent this ideal is the very fabric of the school as institution. What Conrado lived and hoped for at his school, amongst his colleagues, "the mountain" they were climbing, can be understood as a vestige of liberal humanism's dream of and for the Man [*sic*] of Reason. Indeed, one might argue that Conrado's retreat from this idealized collective, his realization that "the mountain no longer existed", represents a moment of tragic lucidity on his part. By looking at the wider context, the boundaries between individual 'madness' and collective 'insanity' become blurred. Naranjo uses a fable from

Kahlil Gibran, *The Madman*, to illustrate this point. All the residents of a city, with the exception of the king and lord chamberlain, drink from a bewitched well. The next day the enchanted population plot to overthrow the king because he is deemed by them to be mad. That evening the king and the lord chamberlain order the water be brought to them, and drink themselves, and then there was “great rejoicing in that distant city of Wirani, because its king and its lord chamberlain had regained their reason” (Gibran, quoted in Naranjo, 1974, p.155). We may smile on reading that such a thing could occur in “a distant city”, but as Naranjo makes clear:

[F]ew would argue today about the psycho-pathological quality of the model personality in our culture. So we may retain the notion that mental health is characterized by the perception of reality, while accepting that the ordinary human condition is somewhere in between extremes of delusion and perception of the truth. This intermediate condition is not characterized so much by the suffering of the individual as by the social aberrations that result from his [sic] perceptions. For this reason Fromm prefers to speak of “socially patterned defects” rather than neurosis. The dogmatic assertion of “truth” and “reality” by different groups sharing different notions of them is central to all prejudice. (Naranjo, 1974, p.156)

It is interesting to note that Conrado, when he left his school, returned to the community of the village he grew up in, and took up a practical life of manual labour.²⁶ His intellectual life stripped back, Conrado faced his self-delusions as he came into contact with ‘reality’ as event. Specifically, he describes his time working as a fruit picker among immigrant labourers, where in having to share a room with “an Arab” and a “black man”, he comes face to face with his intellectually denied racism:

And me: ‘What have you always defended? What have you always said? You’ve said this and that, well, live it! So, from the point onwards I realized that intellectually I am not a racist, but in practice, in my feelings, in the here and now, yes it comes out [...] So, I went through that type of experience, like anybody who lives, but obviously, by not having work [as a teacher], by not having those five hours of teaching, the corrections, the preparations ... (Conrado)

²⁶ Coincidentally, considering Deleuze’s treatise on the desert island (see Section 5, p.159) as a place that might promise us new beginnings, Conrado mentions that on his return to village life, he “felt like Robinson Crusoe” on an “island” of relative security surrounded by the islanders of his youth, whom he was coming to know again.

Two things are notable in this extract from Conrado's narrative: firstly, he clearly hit and recognized the limits of his own reason, the difference between what you profess and what you experience, the existence of other orders of being beyond intellect; secondly, he intimates that the institutionalized 'orders' of teaching were somehow opposed to this type of 'life' knowledge, as if the routine of the teacher were an impediment to 'real' experience. This second point is particularly difficult to square with our common conception of structured and disciplined work as the site in which we are tested and test ourselves.

Though Conrado does not expand on that moment of crisis which obliged him to leave teaching for seven years, he does go into more detail about a subsequent crisis point in which he felt that "he was losing his head". Conrado, more than any other teacher interviewed, with the exception perhaps of Antonio²⁷ and Araceli, appears to be threatened by the possibility of 'losing the plot' ("I was going to explode, I mean it was chaos, hell, a wave of a thousand ideas, a thousand stories, not one resolved"). Whilst this is a particularly dramatic expression of 'madness', it is perhaps just the exaggeration of his basic defence mechanism of intellectualization, of disappearing into a world of ideas, of protection through analysis of the environment, of avoiding risk through procrastination. Is it significant that this crescendo of thought coincided with the period in which he has assumed a position of authority within the teaching collective? However unpleasant this cacophony of thought may have been, it may still have been preferable to risking concrete, palpable decision-making and consequent action.

As we might expect, illusion is omnipresent in the narratives, often only detectable in the form of its shadow, disillusion: for example, Yvete's belief that she was the personification of love, Reina's belief that effort and application were vital for belonging and acceptance (the dimensions of Reina's driven obsessiveness are most apparent in relation to her own daughter, who before she was one year old had a teacher of English and French to 'play' with, so that she would learn). Many of these 'neurotic' symptoms would perhaps go unnoticed in the workplace, indeed they might well be seized upon positively as evidence of commitment,

²⁷ Antonio is one of the Spanish interviewees. See Appendix 2. for a brief description.

determination, cooperation, leadership, confidence, responsibility, discipline, generosity. But Reina is clear that whilst her effort may have been appreciated by others, the problem for her was in her own self-relations. Her utilitarian attitude to her own infant daughter is indicative of the nature of this relationship, which has become more clearly defined as she steps back from it, becoming dis-identified:

The process of [my] growth is bubbling, little by little, taking small steps towards serenity and towards affection. It's true. That's all it is! First of all, towards myself, because *I have treated myself like a dog*. (Reina, my emphasis)

The serenity and affection that for Reina manifest themselves as alternatives to self-domination are perhaps attitudes, aptitudes, practices that would serve to dissolve many of the illusions under which and with which all these teachers struggle. The key turn for Reina is toward acceptance, including the acceptance of limitation, and toward appreciation (of things as they are). In short, the renunciation of an illusion of perfectability and the compulsion to force and manipulate reality, including one's own reality, in the service of a particular need, desire or fear. For Reina, her struggle is to stop struggling; the old order of 'total struggle' must be relinquished in favour of a new order of non-struggle, or of 'selective struggle'. The self-labour of Reina can be seen to be concordant with a utilitarian paradigm of the technological and capitalist *zeitgeist*. We become our own tools, we labour upon ourselves, so that self may better serve itself. Whilst such labour, as it is proposed by Foucault's ethic of the care of self, may be radical once infused with a Kantian critical awareness of the present, it might equally reflect a colonization of the subject by socio-political or psycho-pathological (dis)orders, rather than freely elaborated states. Muriel's testimony demonstrates that she has come to see how she had become her own 'machine' seeking to produce the perfect product²⁸:

Now, when I look back it seems to me that in that search, with so much effort put into change-change, there was an error, which was that in

²⁸ The endlessly evolving software packages of Windows conjure up the idea of just such a ceaseless quest for improvement in the world of industry. In the case of the our pretensions towards ourselves, the title *Myself v3.1*, might capture the permanent dissatisfaction that underscores the (self)obligation to betterment. Such a title implies that we have never truly arrived, we are only ever the version of ourselves that precedes and facilitates a forthcoming, 'new improved' version.

this change-change meant that I did not accept myself as I was, at any time. It seems that it was a big discovery. In the moment that I really began to accept myself, I really began to grow [...] I have accepted that I get embarrassed, that I feel guilty about many things, that I feel inadequate, that I feel useless [...] [and I no longer] try to stop it being noticeable, try to be something else that I am not and hope that nobody notices. (Muriel)

Muriel's repetition of the word "change", thus creating a binary of "change-change," can perhaps be attributed to her (unconscious?) recognition of the reproductive, cyclical, self-regenerating nature of her pathological searching. The potentially absurd rationale of "change-change" is apparent to those who critique the ideology of endless growth in a capitalist economy "which can survive only through its incessant expansion and for which this ever-expanding reproduction, not some final state, is itself the only true goal of the entire movement" (Žižek, 2011, p.188). Nor can this restlessness be attributed only to capitalism, for Marx himself defined communism as the "society in which endless development of human potential will become an end-in-itself" (Žižek, 2011, p.189). Here we can see in operation the chicken-and-the-egg of individual neuroses and Erich Fromm's "socially patterned defects". Is Muriel and Reina's compulsion to run the 'wheel of betterment' (with its supposition of eternal deficiency) just the individual expression of the "instrumental reason" that dominates modernity? For Muriel the true possibility of breaking the grasp of dissatisfaction does not lie in a movement forward (away-from) but toward; it is in the full acceptance of dissatisfaction itself. The Gestaltian discourse would see such this move toward as a "total involvement" in the situation as opposed to the "partial involvement" or the "interrupted" experience implied in the attempt to negate the unsatisfactory nature of the present (Perls, 1973, p.68).

What might be considered as the "instrumental reason" practised by Muriel and Reina, may be "instrumentally" related to forces at work within society at large, but in their case the application would seem to be largely personal. However, in contrast, the socio-political face of the drive for "human potential" is visible in the testimonies of Cecilia and Araceli as the promise of an eternal spring of social upheaval. But even such narratives of struggle do not communicate a professional ideal of rational autonomy, providing evidence, instead, of a disconnection

between experience and what we generally interpret as reason. We are closer to a Foucauldian understanding of our reasoning faculty in which knowledge is no more than:

an 'invention' behind which lies something completely different from itself: a play of instincts, impulses, desires, fear, a will to appropriate. It is on the stage where these elements battle one another that knowledge is produced. (Foucault in Miller, p.214)

Araceli identified forces at work within her that have little to do with cool revolutionary rationality:

My way of relating to the world has been the way of relating to my father [...] that anxiety to change that world [is rooted in] the desire to change my father and the way he looked at me, a fairer way, a kinder way, more understandable, clearer. (Araceli)

The psychoanalytic term for the process Araceli is describing is transference - in this case, a transference that results in a generalized attitude to life, a form of being, a character trait. Araceli's highlighting of the effect of relations with her parents - a domineering, aggressive, absent father, an absent, depressive mother - gives some indication of how her self-understanding is now linked to her sense of history. She now regards the particularities of her subjectivity not as natural, inevitable, reasonable, but as the product of the arbitrary circumstances of her history. She learnt a particular way of being, but it could have been otherwise. Araceli has paid a high price for this history, it has haunted her, and she has been its prisoner:

Combining that internal world and that external world has always been very difficult. Or I lost myself completely in the external, or at the other extreme I disappeared inside myself. I was either very sociable or antisocial. The middle way, the shades of grey, have not worked for me, and sometimes they still don't. (Araceli)

This statement would seem to hint at the dangers of the disunity of external vs. internal. Araceli now searches for a middle way, a penetration of opposites. It is this middle way to which Perls is referring when he says:

The man [sic] who can live in concerned contact with his society, neither being swallowed up by it nor withdrawing from it completely, is the well-integrated man. He is self-supportive because he understands the relationship between himself and his society, as the

parts of the body instinctively seem to understand their relationship to the body-as-a-whole. (Perls, 1973, p.26)

Araceli, in contrast, had been out of balance. This difficulty pervades her account of her teaching life ("My feeling was 'I'm so lost, so alone, so crazy, such a monster'"). Araceli's is a painful history of opportunity lost, and of continually being thrown out of balance. Her account speaks not of Blacker's "positive dissolution" (1998, p.363) in the world, but of a 'negative dissolution' to the degree that she had lost any meaningful control over her actions, being compelled by her own 'nature', and her own 'nature' compelled by history. Her subjectivity was *reactive* rather than *active*²⁹. This sense of being too much *of* the world, is a common feature of the narratives. Teachers defensively/aggressively manipulate themselves and their environment to create boundaries and occupy territories.

Mine is not to Reason Why: Revisited

Evidence of a 'loss of self' is omnipresent in the narratives, and stands in contrast to what might have been found in or compensated by teacher identity. If teacher identity had, for many teachers, contributed to a papering over of *lacuna*, making them invisible, the work of SAT appears to have facilitated an active, personal archaeology, as teachers become engaged in *uncovering* and *recovering* themselves. What must be confronted in this archaeology are the anxieties which the subject attempts to avoid in the act of burying those 'artefacts' of experience that caused them discomfort. Fernando describes his facing down of the challenge of acting the clown (literally) in the SAT programme. As a clown he found himself "jumping into an abyss" previously unthinkable, terrifying. But why such fear? It seems logical perhaps to a great many of us, but perhaps we confuse logical with normal. What is there to fear in acting the fool? Fear of foolishness is a 'reasonable' fear, most people work hard to be taken seriously. But the fear of clowning might contain a perverse twist, which is the fear of becoming ridiculous because you do not master *the art* of being ridiculous. The unreason of the clown threatens our

²⁹ Deleuze's discussion of the 'reactive' and 'active' forces within Nietzsche's Will to Power provides some clarity on how, according to Nietzsche the subject might be separated from our active, generative potential by reactivity (see Deleuze, 2005, pp.36-66).

adult aspirations just as it delights the latent anarchy of the child. It is, perhaps, this adult fear that haunts the strained and purposeful seriousness of classrooms, the fear that breaks out in Carla when she makes a mistake on the blackboard, the fear that we have forgotten how “to make significance out of the drama of helplessness” (Britzman, 1998, p.25).

Significantly, perhaps, children generally find significant drama in their helplessness, it being met with tears, laughter, palpable fear, and determination. This drama maintains the child visibly connected to vulnerability, and, paradoxically, this is recognized as one of their characteristic strengths, a virtue. When Fernando talks about the need to recuperate his history, his child, he is in part talking about this same *dramatis personae* whose enactment, whose agency, is not to superimpose themselves on the world through power and control, but to be totally involved in the world through a complete, uninterrupted response to its vicissitudes. The guiding principle of a return to this engagement might be thought of as a knowledge of *the journey* itself, the knowledge of never arriving, the permanent preparation for the pregnant absurdity of a growth toward Death³⁰. Semetsky reminds us of the a moral of ‘imperative’ of this principle:

Too often we mature adults assume the position that Dewey (1925/1958) ironically dubbed the supreme dignity of adulthood, therefore betraying the very continuity of the growth process while at the same time trying to foster “growth” in our students. But for them to learn, shouldn’t we too? As Noddings (2002) keeps reminding us, the aim of moral education is to contribute to the continuous education of students and teachers.

For Deleuze and Dewey alike, the spiritual dimension is inseparable from organic life, and it is *becoming-child*³¹ that is an indication of this inseparability. How, when, where, under what circumstances, by

³⁰ Following on from the idea of the obligation permanent improvement that is the stuff of modern capitalism, and of humanism’s project for Man [sic] (see p.130), the progress toward would seem to undermine our individual pretensions, just as obsolescence or bankruptcy undermines the pretensions of industry and commerce.

³¹ Deleuze and Guattari have the following to say about their motif of *becoming*: “A becoming is always in the middle; ... it is the in-between, the border or line of flight or descent running perpendicular to both ... it constitutes a zone of proximity and indiscernibility, a no-man’s land, a nonlocalizable relation sweeping up the two distant or contiguous points, carrying one into the proximity of the other” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.29). For example, the (re)incorporation in to ‘adult’ life of the child’s eye view, including its gift for being surprised and fascinated necessarily decodes (or offers a line of flight) from adult norms of behaviour.

means of which events is one capable of *becoming-child*? (Semetsky, 2006, p.122)

It could be argued that one of the *homo sapiens sapiens*' greatest pyrrhic victories is to have left the childish/animal realm of responsiveness in favour of a realm of dominating protagonisms and proactive manipulations that is at the same time both powerful and fragile, susceptible to the anxiety of humiliation and decay. The psychoanalyst Aldo Carotenuto describes our "human, all too human" (Nietzsche, 1996) lack of tolerance for anxiety as "the frustration of insignificance" (Carotenuto quoted in Britzman, 1998, p.25). Britzman asks the question, "What then is lost when insignificance and meaninglessness cannot be tolerated?" The narrative testimonies provide some clues about what has been lost by these particular teachers. Fernando lost his own history, the sensation of ever having been a child. Lorena lost her desire; she is only able only to say what she *doesn't* want ("I want to know what *I* want"). Yvete lost her sensitivity to herself, not comprehending her own mysterious tears ("I said, 'Why am I crying? I don't have any reason!'"). Angeles became estranged from the calm banality of life ("My fantasies kept me fooled"). Julia felt "polyphonic", the words coming out of her mouth being those of others ("What would it be to be me, and not this polyphony?"). Reina lost a sense of worth, justifying her existence by hard work. Conrado lost the ability to stand his own ground ("It's as if I was in limbo, as if I wasn't able to see that I was insecure."). Muriel lost the simple satisfaction of being herself ("it's like I've been going along with this effort to not like myself and of 'I want to be something else', putting on layers and layers, putting on an armour that has prevented me, over many years, from making contact with myself, from being what I really am and want".).

Such statements should not just be seen as evidence of 'neurosis,' but simultaneously as demonstrating an increasing ability among these teachers to distance themselves from neurotic traits or habits sufficiently to be able to *see* them. To be able to denounce these 'situations' represents a victory of reality over delusion, of perspicacity over blindness, a confrontation with meaninglessness and insignificance. If the delusional states that characterize the social madness of our commonplace neuroses depend for their genesis and survival upon the atrophying of our faculties of perception as a defence against the "vicissitudes of love and

hate” (Britzman, 1998, p.20), then the expansion of consciousness, the shining of light into shadowy corners of the psyche, represents an important opportunity to redress the most important loss of all, which is the loss of sensibility or consciousness. Britzman indicates as much when she says that the “ego’s learning [...] is neither linear nor progressive but entangled in its capacity to touch and to be touched” (1998, p.12).

The commonplace, functional neurotic displays what has sometimes been referred to as a “*normosis*”, playing host to a parasitic delusion that depends for its survival on going unnoticed, on appearing ‘natural’, organic to the form of your own life. Naranjo states that “normality is a pseudo-objectivity”, a “cognitive map” that should not be conflated with “objective experience”:

Such a map covers up our pathology; a layer of accurate fantasy covers our deeper layer of inaccurate fantasy, which only manifests itself as symptoms, unwarranted moods, dreams [...] Such dealings, therefore, do not stem from the total personality, but from the masklike censor with which the person identifies ... (Naranjo, 1974, p.159)

The foremost challenge, then, is to bear witness against yourself, against that within you which may actually define who you are, and without which you fear you might turn to dust. Freud’s image of the ego’s cap of perception worn awry is useful here. Freud’s analysis would imply that we must become aware of the particular slant of our own cap. What information from ourselves and from the world do we habitually filter out so that we can maintain our ‘order of things’? The interviews with these teachers provide evidence of just such a cultivation of awareness, discernment, and a corresponding expansion in the teacher’s field of sensibility and connectivity. Fernando maintains that “self-observation” has become second nature to him, a vital tool that enables him to move toward a total involvement in his own experience. In particular, he is able to see when he begins to “fragment” as a result of his labyrinthine thought patterns. This faculty of observation provides some sense of a globalizing consciousness that sustains the different (dis)orders of his thought. Fernando knows himself as someone whose analysis of reality veers continually toward the negative, the paranoid, hyper-critical position often associated with the super-ego. Such compulsive aggression provoked an excess of cognitive noise in his life. However, post-SAT he claims that

he realizes when he has fallen into a diminishing cognitive spiral and is able not only to detain himself, but to establish “internal conversations that are even in my favour”. We can imagine the pleasure of this dis-identification with tortuous thoughts, and a contrasting space made for agreeable, constructive, sufficient thinking. Fernando’s new order of thinking means that he has ceased to lose sleep if he feels he has annoyed someone.

Perhaps it is unsurprising that he feels he has gone too far in his adoption of a more a rough-and-ready attitude to other people’s feelings. His latest shift as he negotiates this difficult terrain of conflict, paranoia and guilt, is toward a recognition of the inevitability of some level of conflict, but with an effort to recognize his own part in provoking any conflict that might occur. This is borne out by his new-found ability to “say sorry”, a gesture or a recognition that had previously been impossible. Linked to this capacity to apologize are two important developments in his awareness of ‘reality’. Firstly, he has become more aware that he is not himself without blemish; and secondly, he is able to sustain the possibility of unity in duality, of being neither wholly good, nor wholly bad. Having previously “navigated under the flag of being very good”, (recalling Bollas’ “violence of innocence” (op.cit.)), Fernando is now able to entertain the position of being simultaneously ‘good’ and ‘evil’, in so doing transcending their polarity. Error, perhaps, is now assumed not as proof of absolute evil, rather as one action among many. Thus error does not consign the subject to the state of unequivocal (and permanent?) guilt, so that Fernando might feel freer to admit his involvement in life’s sordid “egotisms”. Contained within what might be called the ethical relativism of this ‘Fall’, is the idea of the dissolution of the fixity of the subject. In this dissolved, unfolding subject, actions no longer emanate from an essence, or reflect back upon an essence; rather, the subject is continually being born anew in each moment. One is only as good or bad as one’s last act. A wrong action does not make you a bad person, just as a virtuous act does not make you a good person. Curiously, the immediacy of this ‘morality’ is perhaps more exacting than the summative tendency of our evaluations of our ‘goodness’ in which a moral slip can be counterbalanced by previous virtue, or in which one mortal crime makes

consequent 'goodness' into an irrelevance (the murderer can never remove the stain of spilt blood).

Fernando's new moral order would seem to be more complete, more real, more connected than the 'mad' and perhaps reactive assertion of his innocence, which made him, by default, an other-worldly, permanent victim of circumstances (Why me again, when I am trying hard to be good? or, Am I always being punished because deep down I am bad?). We might say that his cognitive ordering of the world had succeeded in removing him from its vicissitudes, whereas his growing appreciation of multiplicity is rooting him within reality, converting him from somebody to which things happened, to somebody who is totally implicated in their experience of the world. It is worth quoting at length Naranjo's description of the journey toward experience:

Deepening our contact with reality entails far more than a shift from conceptualization to experience. Once the veil of reason and pseudoreality is removed, there is still the path from illusion to reality, from assumptions and distorted images of reality (now exposed) to true contact. Behind the screens of the ego there are deeper screens, based on less conscious but greater fears. (1974, p.170)

According to Naranjo, two avenues for the transformation of delusion and ungrounded fear into 'reality' are available to us, both of which are present in any one approach to growth:

One avenue is that of letting the delusional system "wear itself out" spontaneously as it is exposed to conscious scrutiny [...] we outgrow ourselves through reflective awareness and choice [...]

The other avenue into reality, instead of attending to and expressing the area of delusion (symptoms, feelings, fantasies, or the stream of consciousness with its diverse ingredients), moves into reality and squeezes it, as it were, for more and more. This is the way of understanding, when rightly understood (as distinct from conceptual learning). Every drop of true understanding – which is experiential knowledge – kills some ghost in our fantasy life and opens up a way into the real, where we may find further understanding. (Naranjo, 1974, pp.171-172)

These two avenues share parallels with Foucault's vindication of truth, available to us in the practice of a critical attitude to the present, and revealed to us by our immersion in event, in experiences that test us (Miller, 1994, pp.271-272).

Fernando observes himself, questions himself, and he experiences new perspectives for understanding, not least in permitting the sudden and unusual experience of moments “of harmony [...] of beauty” in the situation that unfolds before his eyes. Fernando’s description of these moments reveals a different order of understanding from his normally fragmented universe. It is the order of experience normally associated with the ‘other reasonings’ of the spiritual dimension of comprehension, an epiphany of connection and unity.

The fact that such experiences of a universal “unification” are sporadically available to him (“[I] can feel things that I used to only think”.) is what reassures Fernando that he is on the right path, that he is not as lost as he feared and sometimes still fears. Contact with the order of his own life is the stepping off point for a contact with the other. It could be significant, considering his interest in the recuperation of his childhood, that the ‘epiphany’ he describes encompasses a quality of innocence in its reference to a mood of peace and unity, before the division of the Fall by which the temptation to knowledge and choice (i.e. self-determination) removed us from the grace of Paradise.

Continuing on in these semi-biblical terms, it is worth recalling Araceli’s odyssey because she herself frames her experience in dramatic, biblical terms. It is, perhaps, the narrative which most fully encapsulates the idea of being ‘delivered’ ‘saved’ from oneself. Araceli admits she was considered “freaky”, provoking either loyalty or loathing in her colleagues. She dominated, argued, bullied, manipulated, protected, triumphed, was defeated, raged, resisted and was, to use her own words, “neurosis taken to its extreme”. In the SAT she was disarmed by a force of teaching and by the figure of a teacher to whom she was able to cede control;

So it was then that I took my hat off, and I said, “At last I have found a teacher that first of all puts my feet on the ground!” And after doing that my search began from a different place. Mysticism and the esoteric were not important anymore. Instead, from the clarity of the day to day, observing myself, able to choose and not choose consciously. [...] I can choose, continue, or not continue, and if I continue, it is like Gurdjieff says, observe yourself, don’t lie to yourself, and don’t judge yourself, and to cross that is what I learnt in the SAT and in Gestalt [therapy] [...] I re-situated myself in the world. I felt like I had a place again, because my sensation was, I am so lost, so alone, so crazy, I was a beast. And the fact of re-finding myself [in my personality type] with

other people who are the same as me [...] it made me feel grounded [...] and comforted. Also, there is no salvation, but there is a path to being happy, given who I am. (Araceli)

The image of Araceli taking her hat off recalls Freud's cap of the ego worn awry. Moreover, her gesture is important because it is a recognition of the authority of someone else. By this movement Araceli is returning to that place where another person can be looked up to. Such a person can teach in such a way that makes her resistance to learning impossible. Araceli's battle to unlearn what she has learnt, in order that she might become different to herself, and her final acquiescence to new learning from a particular teacher, at a particular time, echoes with Britzman's affirmation that the:

study of learning is a study of how individuals attach, displace, forget, and disengage knowledge. And with these moves, the study of learning is inseparable from the study of love. (Britzman, 1998, p.31)

In this study of love, in Araceli's flowering of admiring love for a teacher, what is exchanged becomes more than knowledge. What is exchanged is a contagion of understanding and a love of knowledge that is inseparable from a love of the communicator of that knowledge, the fusion of message and messenger. This is the ideal relational place of education, it is what teachers of both the competent and charismatic discourse aspire to, a place of moral authority. However, the narratives suggest it is uncommon for teachers to still be in relation to such a teacher themselves, and as such they are excluded from a continuing experience of what it might be like to look up to someone as having greater critical awareness and understanding of 'Life' than yourself. The narratives of this study can therefore be read as being steeped in a sense of loss. At some point these teachers had been 'abandoned' to continue the path of learning alone. In the testimonies of Araceli and Muriel there is explicit evidence of a search for the teacher, whilst this search can be understood as explicitly present in the alignments and orientations pursued by all the teachers. The experience of the SAT seems to represent a reconnection with an explicit susceptibility to this figure of Teacher. The recognition of the *teacher's teacher* (in Araceli's case she is referring to Claudio Naranjo) is something that perhaps the world of education is ontologically suspicious of and resistant to, but its rediscovery for teachers like Araceli and Juan (see detailed

discussion in *Questions of Performance*) mark a vital return to the imperative of learning, the perception of our smallness and the desire to continue growing. For these teachers 'Mine is *no longer* not to reason why, mine is *no longer* but to do or die'. In this re-discovery, they have found part of an answer to Marx's question "Who shall educate the educators?" The educators must educate themselves, not only through the cultivation of a critical relationship to themselves and to the other, but also in the cultivation of their teachers, or those whose thought, intervention, action and support might serve to sustain and orientate their continued growth toward maturity.

Chapter 11: Questions of Order - Discussion and Conclusion

It seems obvious to assert that there are many 'orders' criss-crossing the school, that it should comprise a polyphony of forces, structures, priorities, imperatives, organizations: the orders of intra- and inter-subjective relations; the orders of knowledge (curriculum); the orders of space/time/number (timetables, age, class size and arrangements); the socio-political orders (economics, class, citizenship); or the orders of instrumental reasoning and mechanics of institutional life. Schooling can be said to represent the attempt to align these orders and to insist upon their compatibility and the 'naturalness' of their alignments. Power, it is argued, is in service to its population.

These claims for schooling are refuted by Foucault's assertion that power is productive, i.e. that this same population 'served' by its institutions has in fact been 'created' by those same institutions. The circularity of this situation is obvious, and the continued ability to argue that the school, indeed the whole global structure of democratic capitalism, gives us what we want, need, and deserve depends on its capacity to disarm and stifle other potentially dissonant orders. Within this critique, the work of school is to separate us from the power of our own dissonance, to silence our own noises, smooth over the bumps and smother or pathologize inconformity. Hidden in the apparent pragmatism of the aspirations of the modern state is a utopian tendency which, according to Žižek, may have been celebrated by Hegel:

Hegel may appear to celebrate the prosaic character of life in a well-organized modern state where disturbances are overcome in the tranquillity of private rights and the security of the satisfaction of needs: private property is guaranteed, sexuality is restricted to marriage, the future is safe. In this organic order, universality and particular interests appear reconciled: the "infinite right" of subjective singularity is given its due, individuals no longer experience the objective state order as a foreign power intruding on their rights, they recognize in it the substance and frame of their very freedom. (Žižek, 2011, p.335)

Žižek maintains that the impossibility of the permanence of this *mirage* of homeostasis between the universal and the individual is manifest in the necessary eruption of war, by which “universality reasserts its right over and against the concrete-organic appeasement inherent in prosaic social life” (ibid., p. 336). The eternal resurgence of the principle of negative universality, manifest as war, is in keeping with Freud’s thesis in *Civilization and its Discontents*, and in his theorizing of the universal drives of *libido* and *thanatos*. Such drives speak of orders that are foreign to prosaic social life. Freud’s foregrounded and insisted upon an alternative psychic order of organic drives and attachments that are prior to all other orders. Such an order does not lie comfortably, nor can be seamlessly co-opted by the dominant discourses of education; rather, educational relations finds at their heart a series of forces that both determine education’s battles and simultaneously ensures an unwinnable eternal war. Here we can detect a parallel circular order in which the psyche creates an anxious drive toward civilization which in turn interrupts the psyche. We might say that the problem with this circularity is that it spins in the opposite direction to the productive power of the school as an institution. And herein, perhaps, lies the political agony of the psycho-social realm. From the point of view of society’s attempt to construct an organic identity for itself, comprising the alignment of cellular individuals to socio-economic parameters, the complexities of the singular psyche represent an interference in its attempted orders. And, from the point of view of the singular psyche, society’s civilizing socio-economic imperatives represent an interference of the turbulent vicissitudes of love and hate, and oblige us to dissimulate the ‘real’ struggles for power and dominion occurring in our relations to self and other³².

In the history of modernity, there can be no doubt that *Psyche* has been eclipsed by the Enlightenment’s social project and the apparent triumph of *Logos*. Freud, even as he courted science with his claim to academic, medical rigour, represented a radical return to the order of *Psyche*, a return that has yet to be fully recognized in the education system, not least because to do so would probably result in an excessive problematization of traditional education goals and practices. As Britzman says:

³² See also Deleuze and Guattari (1987) on capitalism.

When ontology meets epistemology, when the subject of education can be extended to what is barely perceptible but still exerts its own force, the appearance of education can become complicated by its own others: the incognito, the unapparent, the contested, indeed the “what else” and the “elsewhere” of learning. In positing education as a question of interference (as opposed to engineered development), we have a very different epistemology and ontology of actions and actors: one that insists that the inside of actors is as complicated as the outside and that this combination is the grounds of education. Not only does the world impinge cruelly upon the subject, and not only does the subject’s inner world constitute the be-all of understanding and misunderstanding: the subject lives both dilemmas in ways that cannot be predicted, authorized by another, or even deliberately planned and separated. (Britzman, 1998, pp.5-6)

Perhaps it is not surprising that the school, whose civilizing or disciplinary function according to Foucault is both to totalize and individualize a population, and thus to create collective and individual identities, would resist, or actively oppose, the full weight and implication of this inner world which threatens to undo all attempts to plan and to separate. For Foucault, the school’s deployment of its games of communication and relations of power has “the precise role of introducing insuperable asymmetries and excluding reciprocities” among all subjects within its reach (Foucault, 1991, p.212). From a Foucauldian perspective we should not be surprised by alienated, alienating teachers and students, as the school functions precisely as a machine of alienation. We should be more surprised when teachers like *Erendida* *discover* themselves as alienated, alienating, disenchanted with what Lacan would have called their “master-signifier”³³ (Lacan, 2001):

I worked a lot under the inertia of what they said had to be – and sometimes they weren’t even well thought out recipes – it was just working according to the recipe but without all the necessary ingredients. And so it was part of ignoring the most essential needs of the children [...] and I now understand that I didn’t ignore them

³³ According to the Matthew Sharpe’s entry on Lacan in the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, master-signifiers “are those signifiers that the subject most deeply identifies with, and which accordingly have a key role in the way s/he gives meaning to the world. As was stressed, Lacan’s idea about these signifiers is that their primary importance is less any positive content that they add to the subject’s field of symbolic sense. It is rather the efficacy they have in reorienting the subject with respect to all of the other signifiers which structure his/her sense of herself and the world. It is precisely this primarily structural or formal function that underlies the crucial Lacanian claim that master signifiers are actually ‘empty signifiers’ or ‘signifiers without a signified’” (Sharpe, 2005).

because I'm evil, but because I was ignoring my own needs, and so it was difficult for me to recognize their needs. (Erendida)

Žižek uses a fragment from Kafka's "Couriers" to evoke a situation of 'order' without meaningful or significant reference:

They were given the choice between becoming kings or the couriers of kings. In the manner of children, they all wanted to be couriers; as a result, there are only couriers. They gallop through the world shouting to each other messages that, since there are no kings, have become meaningless. Gladly they would put an end to their miserable existence, but they dare not, because of their oaths of service. (Kafka, quoted in Žižek, 2011, p.354)

Though not exactly transposable to the situation of teachers like Erendida, Kafka's couriers do have some significant echoes within the orders of education. As Foucault maintained in his analysis of modern power, it becomes difficult to distinguish between decision makers and the forces that 'make' the decision makers. We may identify a puppet master in the wings, but must suspect also that the puppet master is not without strings, albeit those that tie them to themselves. If Freud situates us as invested in the intimate history of a troubled development, Foucault demonstrates that we are equally invested by a collective cultural history. Both of these histories situate the order of unreason and universalizing forces in the heart of our autonomous Reasons.

At the end of the day, teachers are bound by their version of the Hippocratic oath of service, which is a service to the continuity of our collective future. Even the most apparently autonomous teachers, *agents provocateurs* such as Cecilia or Araceli, share common ground with a systemic tendency; the *status quo* of schooling does not cease to be utopian in its claims to be preparing the coming generations to take their place in a history of ceaseless economic and social progress: the present of the child must be rigorously framed and qualified by this adult future. Likewise, it is the problematic dream of the 'good student'. Responsibility for fulfilment in the present is replaced with responsibility for fulfilment in the future. High performance across the board, regardless of real levels of interest for each student, has its rewards in the present (winning and doing well is applauded), but ultimately the purpose has little to do with the present, it is disconnected from any 'real' emergent value, rather it is required as evidence of a potential future performance and as a

construction of its foundations. The veracity of this is proved by the thought experiment of imagining what would happen in schools if students and teachers were to be de-coupled from the curriculum and from examination. Something very different would be occurring in our classrooms. Present time and physical presence would be experienced differently. One would suspect that Foucault's 'unruly body' might arise, Phoenix-like from the ashes.

Whether schooling looks backwards, forwards, or both, it is certainly true that it is rarely occupying the present richly, deeply. Generally speaking the problem of tense is managed through the domination of the present as the emergent is forced into alignment with the past-future continuum. It is in this dominated present that Foucault's "discipline" practices its arts on the "docile body". To be effective within the past-future continuum of schooling the teacher must be able to harness the present, and this generally involves minimizing and/or aligning all the interactions of the classroom. As Britzman says, "education demands that everyone get to the point" (1998, p.37). The classroom is to be on-task, whether this be listening to the teacher (traditional) or doing group work (progressive). In short, teachers are responsible for exercising control, either through the orchestration of the 'voices' of the classroom toward a goal, or through authoritarian approaches, or both. This question of temporality is a fundamental problem for all teachers. To which temporality do they owe allegiance? In which tense is education to be conducted? Which time is education responsible for sustaining? It is, among other things, this 'ordering' of time that makes teaching one of Freud's impossible professions.

Looking at teachers' testimonies, we could conclude that the SAT programme consistently provides an experience which helps to make teaching a more *possible* profession. Fernando, in reference to the model of personality (the enneagram) used within the SAT, has come to the conclusion that "it is a key, and it works. If it is or isn't true, that we will never know. It is a key, and it opens doors". Fernando's 'open door' image becomes more potent once we understand the open door as symbolic of the possibility of a freeing up of movement and communication. An open door is a place of connection. The orders of education, of teaching and teaching identity, are notable for a tendency to exclude, prohibit, separate, cordon-off and isolate. If many of education's relations are characterized negatively as

non-relations, as a loss or death of relation, then the animation and dusting down of these dead zones represents an important departure from 'business as normal'.

Previously closed doors that, post-SAT, seem to have been opened include: the door between the intimate and the public (e.g. Igor and Irene's sharing of their feelings in the classroom); between innocence and experience (e.g. Araceli's 'cynical' belief in the possibility of salvation); between helplessness and utility (e.g. Carla's ability to listen to her students without imposing a resolution); between child and adult (e.g. Fernando and his 'Mary Poppins' umbrella); between struggle and ease (e.g. Reina's work of acceptance); between reason and un-reason (e.g. Julia's recognition of the 'madness' of many institutional normalities); between power and submission (e.g. Cecilia's empowerment through rendition to 'the system'); between professionalism and idiosyncrasy (e.g. Nieves' discovery of the 'power to be me'); between the group and its individual members (Conrado's increasing ability to stand apart from the group but maintain key points of communication as part of the group); between obedience and rebellion (e.g. Dora's recognition of the dissimulations required in fulfilling her role); between service and selfishness (e.g. Yvete's ambiguities around her role in the union).

In place of the hard surfaces of identity and practice, characterized by an impermeability to 'otherness', these narratives bear witness to a new (dis)order characterized by an increasing permeability between the layers and modalities of experience and between actors. This results in, and makes possible, an increasing ability to perceive and sustain multiplicity, and facilitates a move from an identification with teaching as essentially programmatic to teaching as potentially responsive. It is the (dis)order of a heightened connectivity, an access to more points of reference and sources of 'inspiration', that makes this responsiveness possible. Such responsiveness is not value neutral; it would seem, rather, to favour the here and now, the emergent, and a concern for the orders of relationship above the orders of knowledge and curriculum. In this sense we could say that the "intensification of subjectivity" (Foucault, 1997, p.239) that the SAT would appear to favour has conspicuous political consequences once we get down to a Foucauldian level of the micro-physics of power, or if we acknowledge with Žižek that what we must look for is "a refined search of signs coming from the future", a

“new radical questioning of the system” which might involve the “strategy of interrupting the smooth flow of our participation in the routines of daily life” (2011, p.363).

Such interruption is one of the actions that make possible a radical process of ‘becoming’. This notion of ‘becoming’ contains a sense of an unfolding carried out under the momentum of experience (Deleuze, 1987). But ‘becoming’ is just as likely, if not more likely, to be a sedimentation of experience, a solidification of identity in time. Where we might suspect sedimentation and solidification, meaningful identity work does not occur under a ubiquitous law of growth; rather, at a certain point identity work becomes counter-gravitational and requires the input of considerable psychic energy in order that we escape the gravitational field of the solid mass of our existing concepts, values and orders. The denser this mass, the more energy will be required, the more difficult it will be. To extend the metaphor, with such an input of energy in small doses spread over time, or in an abrupt and violent injection into our psychic system, we may achieve an orbital position, more loosely attached to the centre, or we may escape the gravitational field altogether to drift into space, there facing the possibility of being swept up by some other gravitational field, some other persuasion or paradigm.

Araceli, for example, would seem to have escaped the gravitational pull of a hostile world. This escape has been potentialized by an opening up to learning and a re-enchantment with education, a return to the belief in the possibility of sanity, of exemplary dominion over self- and other-relations. Such a re-enchantment perhaps re-connects Araceli with an old demand towards those first others, her parents. As Britzman argues regarding these key relationships:

Analyst Otto Fenichel noticed that what is actually demanded in that demand for that first love is closer to the child’s (unconscious) desire to be the parent rather than to have the parent’s love. The child desires the parent’s position: “The child’s longing for love and affection [from those first others] is simultaneously longing for participation in their omnipotence.” If we consider this in an educational context, we might say that the student desires to be as important and as all knowing as she/he imagines the teacher to be; the student desires the teacher’s omnipotent position. (Britzman, 1998, p.34)

'Omnipotence' is usually taken negatively, as pretension, wishful thinking, but faith in this possibility, at least in the other, is ultimately what makes teaching and learning possible. Belief in the power of the other, and what issues from them, persuades us to open up to a dangerous field of learning, which is the "intensification of subjectivity" (op.cit.). Araceli opened herself up to the 'realities' of her "normosis" and began to experience herself not only as no longer special, but also as no longer alone. From this embryonic sense of connection with the world, with its implicit, inevitable, unavoidable vulnerabilities, everything began to change:

Everything was changed. In my daily relations, at work, in my friendships, at home. Everything was changed. I was situated in another place [...] and I was able to understand that when another person says 'I can't', then they can't [...] they can't [...] Then I began to break down and show myself as vulnerable in front of someone else, and say that things were happening to me, that I felt fear. And from there I was able to receive, at work, and in my daily life also, a compassionate love [...] I have been able to show myself, let my guard down and trust [...] trust in my work colleagues, and stop believing that I have to hold it all up. I don't have to sustain anything, not even myself. I give myself up to something bigger than myself [...] its like I am recuperating something that at one point I had, which is an absolute confidence in life. (Araceli)

Araceli is most certainly a Lyotardian "conduct[or] of intensities" (op. cit). The difference is that her new intensity of faith is a life raft, allowing her to float through stormy seas, immersed, but sensing the possibility of a happy ending, a blessing, rather than the calamity of impending disaster. It is from the sense of the possibility of her own worldly happiness that she reaches out to people, no longer to save them, but to accompany them in their own journey. If Araceli's is perhaps the most intense of the narratives of growth and maturation, all the teachers interviewed revealed a shattering of some of the delusions of self and new attempts to penetrate and be penetrated by life. As such their collective sense holds true to St Paul's famous invocation to spiritual growth:

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. (St. Paul, 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13)

St. Paul's reiteration of the word "child" ironically has the effect of reminding us of childhood, it insists on carrying us back to that place only to depart once more. As Semetsky reminds us, this turning away from childish things is, paradoxically, a turning toward the openness of the child to learning, to their permeability and transparency. We must *become-child* so that we may cease to be circumscribed by the interpretations of extinct realities that shaped the learning of our childhood. Žižek describes such retrospective metamorphosis by reference to the Hegelian dialectic process:

in which we are dealing with a continuous metamorphosis of the same substance-subject which develops in complexity, mediates and "sublates" its content into a higher level: is not the whole point of the dialectical process that, precisely, we never go through a zero point, that the past content is never radically erased, that there is no radically new beginning? (Žižek, 2011, p.306)

Section 4:

Questions of Performance

The 'performance' of the title of this section refers to the way in which teachers take up their function within the 'purposes' and 'orders' of education explored in the previous sections. This 'taking up' or 'being taken up by' includes not only a concept of agency, but also the idea of the 'show' and how the camouflages of teacher identity are learnt or not learnt, the different directions in which teachers push or are pulled, as they attempt to answer the call of teaching between the shadows of their unconscious and of the imposing edifice of the school. Three themes will be explored: Chapter 12, *The Learner Teacher*, looks at the question of how and what teachers need to learn in order to become teachers, about the 'becoming' of teachers and its obstacles and potentialities; Chapter 13, *The Arts of Getting By*, takes up the question of how teachers prosper or perish within their identities, their survival or non-survival as they negotiate their way through the multiplicity of demands upon them; Chapter 14, *Great Expectations*, presents an examination of the wider cultural and individual expectations that gives the teachers' performance or non-performance such apparent import: What are teachers expected to deliver to us – and to deliver us from – and what do they themselves expect to deliver? The exploration of each of these themes involves a loose 'before' and 'after' (i.e. revisited) organizing principle, the former presenting expressions from the pre-SAT position, and the 'revisited' section presenting movements and transformations occurring as a result of the SAT experience. Once again, as in the previous sections, the use of the "revisited" motif here is similar to the "psychoanalytic definition of learning and development: new editions of old conflicts" (op.cit.). Finally, as in sections 2 and 3, the last chapter of the section, Chapter 15, *Discussion and Conclusions*, attempts to draw together the evidence of the previous chapters and place it within a the broader context of educational thinking and practice.

Chapter 12: The Learner Teacher?

One of the recurrent issues in the narratives is the worry of failing to learn *how* to teach properly. Unsurprisingly, as the competence discourse proliferates, the threat/reality of *incompetence* looms larger. Erendida, for example, assiduously followed the prescriptions of government policy and reproduced inappropriate teaching out of blind obedience; no other option existed, nor did she possess the critical faculties or passion required to develop and practice alternatives. Not only this, she was compelled to excel in the performance of these adopted actions. She felt she had to dominate the procedures and practices that dominated her. Erendida is clear that the effort, the focus of her learning had been on her assimilation of the dominant discourse of competence. Difficult knowledge for Erendida involved the admission that her efforts to be competent might have been misguided, that doing what you are told is not necessarily 'innocent' and that uncritical and unimaginative dedication is not the same as diligence.

Such knowledge is difficult and painful because the ideal of competence had been undeniably attractive to Erendida. She aspired to be effective, efficient and capable. However, self-doubt continued to abound in her professional world, especially when facilitating workshops for fellow teachers:

I am very dependent on everyone else. I am insecure about what I know and what I can contribute to others even when I have prepared myself thoroughly. Every time I get up in front of a group, I always have a nagging suspicion that something is not quite right. (Erendida)

Erendida's need for certainty was constantly frustrated by the evasiveness of unequivocal evidence. She struggled to read looks on faces for signs of approval or disapproval. The anxiety increased as she became engulfed in her difficulties in ascertaining her *effect*. Erendida's main problem was that her activity did not appear to be rooted in her own convictions. What she was doing was borrowed, just as her sense of its value was borrowed (from the faces in her group). We might say that post-SAT Erendida is beginning to learn the impossibility of attaining the security or a sense of 'rightness' through the reassuring gaze of the other; this

'other' is too polymorphous and polyphonic to satisfy her doubts. Erendida, so concerned to be a 'good teacher,' was unable to learn whether or not she was or was not a good teacher. Pre-SAT, all she knew was that she had tried.

Erendida's predicament is telling. How do we know that we have learnt to teach, above and beyond teaching's obviously technical components? How does a teacher know Dewey's communicative act of wonder has occurred (op.cit.), or how it occurred? Where to look for the evidence? Who to believe? In the "cacophony of calls" (Britzman, 1991, p.223) that is education, what criteria can a teacher apply to determine *their own satisfaction* with their professional identity and practice? Teacher inspection and student exam results provide some external points of reference, but Erendida clearly remained unconvinced by external referents, and her narrative provides a clear example of the difficulties that arise around seeing and evaluating the self. Moore refers to Žižek as a way of understanding the difficulties that teachers such as Erendida encounter

[...] as a result of a "gap" between "the way we see ourselves" (imaginary identification) and "the point from which [we are] being observed to be likeable to [ourselves]" (symbolic identification) (Žižek, 1989, p.106) – typically linked, in the professional field, to the requirement for a 'symbolic mandate': for example 'I have been mandated to be teacher, but what must I be – what am I expected to be – within the terms of the symbolic order, the 'Other,' and within the terms of my own image of self, in order to justify my role as a teacher, in order to be able to explain my mandate to myself and others?' (Moore, 2004, p.159)

In the case of Erendida, her identification with the 'Other' as the mirror through which she constructs her own hazy self image appeared to have been almost total. If her narrative demonstrates a powerful example of 'mirroring', the question of negotiating identity in relation to a symbolic mandate, - half imagined, half real - is common to all of the teachers interviewed. What is most interesting in the narratives, however, is the enormous variety regarding how people understand this symbolic mandate and position themselves within its shadow. If we can suppose that formally speaking the symbolic mandate does not vary greatly, what then accounts for the great differences that open up between teachers as their identities crystallize during the first years of teaching? How are teachers learning to be so different? Or how are they not learning to be the same? Milbray

McLaughlin and Joan Talbert (1990, p.1) turn their attention to the issue of *difference* when they ask:

How is it that two teachers with the same educational background and professional aspirations who are teaching in the same objective school context – in schools with similar levels of resources and student and community characteristics, for example – can develop substantially different instructional goals, practices, and student learning outcomes?

They conclude: “Research prompts us [...] to see effective teaching as the product of *individual attributes* and the settings in which teachers work and learn to teach” (ibid., p.2, my italics). Presumably they would not restrict this conclusion to “effective teaching” but rather see all and any teaching as the result of this mix. Other authors have drawn attention to the inconvenience of this ‘obvious’ yet forgotten *fact of subjectivity*. It has, unsurprisingly, been argued from different quarters that prior beliefs and perceptions act as “filters” and affect the ways in which pre-service teacher training programmes are experienced and approached (Alfonso, 2001; see also Hollingsworth, 1989; Weinstein, 1989; Wideen *et al.*, 1998; Britzman, 1991). Moore draws attention to the echo with John Mezirow’s wider analysis of adult learning

in which acquired ‘meaning schemes’ and perspectives effectively ‘protect’ the individual from challenging existing assumptions and beliefs, acting as a mechanism through which new information, advice, and experience are accommodated within an essentially unchanging philosophy. (Moore, 2004, p.15)

In terms that echo with Naranjo’s assertion of the selective ‘intelligence’ of our ‘normal’ psychology (op.cit.), Mezirow argues that our mental schemes

constitute our ‘boundary structure’ for perceiving and comprehending new data [...] [allowing] our meaning system to diminish our awareness of how things really are in order to avoid anxiety, creating a zone of blocked action and self-deception. (Mezirow, 1991, p.49)

This direction of analysis leads inevitably to an acknowledgement of the ‘defensive’ function of the teacher identity structure. Whilst it is commonly assumed that teachers are proactive in accommodating themselves within the discourses of schools – i.e. that teachers take on the role - less attention is paid to the evidence that teachers proactively accommodate the discourses of school

within their pre-existing mental schemes. The evidence of this present study supports the view that teachers in their 'default' subjectivity tend not to interact 'objectively' with the discourses of education. The examples of teachers being involved in 'cheating' – grading inflation, making up results, altering students' results etc. – are graphic evidence of teachers 'interpreting' the performative discourse of education. Reading between the lines in the narratives of this study, it is possible to conclude that the identity of teachers is constructed around a curious mixture of learning and resistance to learning. What distinguishes these teachers from each other, in terms of their attitudes, values and practices, would seem to have little to do with having learnt and assimilated different 'discourses' of professional identity; rather, much of what is distinctive about their identity, the significant difference, what makes them 'good' or 'bad' teachers (or good at some things and bad at others) is rooted in more general orientations towards life. Yvete, for example, originally 'learnt' to justify herself as a teacher principally through reference to her activism within the union, defending the rights of teachers. Conrado's mandate grew up around his membership of a co-operative staff team. For Carla, her sense of being a legitimate teacher is intimately bound to her being a gatekeeper of right and wrong, and good and bad. Reina's mandate derived from her willingness to put in the hours and be there for students. Cecilia first justified herself as a teacher through distancing herself from the institution of teaching. Juan seemed to derive his mandate from a sense of entitlement to a position (and power) that was to be enjoyed. These examples are representative of a fact that the mandate to teach is interpreted differently by each teacher, and that consequently the learning of a professional identity is different. So how to account for these idiosyncrasies? Is such apparently haphazard 'learning' to be welcomed or stamped out? Or does the existence of these idiosyncratic differences make the project of a common educational practice the stuff of utopian dreaming, or totalitarian imposition?

Certainly, the project of the competent teacher is challenged by the narrative evidence of this research, evidence that captures the experience of teaching from the inside, not its surfaces, not its performances. What stands out is that teachers' strengths and weaknesses vary considerably. Carla, presumably, has no difficulty

maintaining order in the classroom, but did have difficulty in creating an unthreatening or nurturing environment for learning, especially for the more 'delicate' of her students. Lorena is nurturing, empathic, concerned to 'bond' emotionally with her students, but confused by the boundaries between 'self' and 'other', and had come to see herself as invasive. Teachers, it seems, inevitably interact with teacher identity discourse, and with the structures of schooling, from the ground of such strengths and weaknesses, from pre-established attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviours. As such, teacher identity takes shape in the "permanent provocation" (Foucault, 2000d, pp.326-348) between two agonistic forces, one which would move teachers toward the homogeneity of the technician, and the other toward the heterogeneity of the personal.

We see a clear difference of interpretation in the narratives of Nieves and Juan. Whilst Nieves was clear that being a teacher meant setting boundaries and limits in her relations with students, Juan was a joker and merged in and out of the student body through his use of frequently caustic humour. If Nieves set boundaries with her students, she was unable to set boundaries with her colleagues, and 'won' her mandate in school through an undifferentiated involvement in all tasks. What Juan 'won' through the sense of his entertainment value, Nieves 'won' through being quintessentially useful and willing. These teacher identities are not therefore learnt independently of the person; rather, teacher identity becomes one more outlet through which the individual manifests their previous learning and their resistance to learning, their strategies for negotiating 'self' and 'other'. The great problem, both for education authorities and for teachers themselves, is that it cannot be assumed that these strategies are entirely reasonable or responsive to 'reality'. In fact, even within 'normal psychology' the subject stubbornly remains subjective - their thinking, feeling, and acting in the present being 'conditioned' by previous learning (see *Questions of Order* for a more detailed discussion). The result is often a bad fit between visions of 'reality' (no one sees eye to eye), or a bad fit between what is expected and what is given and/or possible (the teacher is operating within their 'natural' and seemingly insurmountable limits as a person), or a bad fit between the contours of teaching identity and the real motivation or inner experience (the teacher is

divided between their exteriority and interiority and experiences teaching as a site of conflict).

There is unequivocal evidence that teachers in the study have experienced and often are continuing to experience these 'bad fits' of teaching. And beyond the immediacy of their own experience, Cecilia, Nieves, Fernando, Erendida, Igor, Araceli and Julia all describe a generalized and systemic experience of incompatibilities among and within teachers. Cecilia is categorical in identifying the central problem of teaching as one of relations between colleagues. The unified staff team, she says, is a fiction. The staff room, and any possibility of consolidating a shared sense of the task in hand, and a fair distribution of the workload, flounders not only because of the difference in vision between one teacher and another, but also because of teachers' inability to negotiate these differences, to acknowledge and arbitrate their involvement in superficial and deep conflict, both intra- and inter-personal, that extends from the intimate and sublime to the collective and ideological. The cost of these conflicts, as they go unattended and abandoned, can be high, and the background of the narratives is littered with teaching's 'walking wounded,' the 'ghosts' of education who have long since given up on the dream of any deep professional satisfaction. Cecilia, with reference to these 'walking wounded,' has realized that:

[...] those that are bitter, and those that are frustrated, and those that don't get on with the students, and those that spend all day complaining about the system, and how bad the kids are, and how bad the government is, and how bad the state is, and how bad the families are, I say, well, goodbye, I'm going, because it is they that are the most frustrated personally, they are people disconnected from themselves and from their needs, and I can see that very clearly because this job is like a mirror, the enthusiastic people that you see, that see potential in the kids, that something can be done, and that begin projects, and that have hopes, it's those people that are connected with themselves and the people that are frustrated and bitter, well, it seems like a disaster to me. (Cecilia)

It is clear from this description, and others like it, that the problem of learning to be a teacher has a negative as well as positive component. Teachers, if they are to flourish and enable others to flourish, need not only to learn their pedagogic 'trade'; from their immersion in the excess of inter- and intra-personal relations of

schooling they also need to *not* learn or *unlearn* certain possible lessons in favour of other lessons. If the construction of identity were a game of snakes and ladders, it is clear that making 'significant' progress in the relational cacophony of schools is as dependent on not stepping on the snakes as it is on finding the ladders. From Cecilia's perspective, and perhaps from her experience, the generic snake would seem to take the form of a polarized view of reality which she feels produces impotence, and eventually disengagement and inaction. As an ideologue she was anti-authoritarian, but in dialogue with her inner needs and anxieties, she came to see that she too had an authoritarian streak and a compulsion towards order. Obviously, the recognition of her own authoritarianism had important repercussions in her relationship to external authority. It allowed her to accommodate herself within 'the system', to become less of an abrasive 'bad fit'. We see a similar issue of polarization, though this time more self-referential, within the identity of Nieves. It seems that her professional identity is built to no small degree around the belief that to be liked/likeable she must be fully available, fully involved, she must say 'yes' indiscriminately. To say 'no' is to be unlikeable. This is, perhaps, a useful polarity to the school, but it exacts a high price on Nieves, and once she has seen through her 'strategy' with its lack of grounding in her own inner life she can see that she had been, in effect, one of the "living dead".

It is perhaps easy to dismiss these personal and group positionings and actions as inevitable idiosyncrasies of human life, but this is to underestimate the real cost to teachers and to schools of the 'guerrilla war' that goes on between and within staff. What is at play is what might be regarded as most reprehensible in us – pride, vanity, vengeance, apathy, anger, dependency – but what is more at stake is power. As understood by Foucault, power is manifest within any relationship as soon as one group or person wants another group or person to think or behave in a particular way (2000d, pp. 336-342). As such, relations and games of power are unavoidable, and indeed the teachers' narratives demonstrate that perhaps the most difficult power games to negotiate are not those between teacher and student, or teacher and state, but within the professional body. The personal and collective cost of these power games can be compounded by difficulties in deciphering the different motivations and orientations around power and its

conflicts. Nieves' professional solidarity appeared, for example, to be innocuous (where is the harm in being helpful?), but it can also be understood as the means by which she asserted herself in a territory, through which she became indispensable, and through which her voice became a legitimized voice. Being helpful can, and does, have its payback. It is not surprising that someone as proactive and involved, someone as willing as Nieves, had become the head teacher of a school, and that this 'seizure' of formal power, built on the back of the informal power of her participation, interested her greatly.

The learner teacher: revisited

A central question of teaching for Nieves and Cecilia, like all of the teachers interviewed, concerned the ways that they were involved in intra- or interpersonal conflicts (technical and relational) that were in some way detrimental to an expansive engagement in their own singular and social lives. Post-SAT, this question was addressed not through the narrow frame of professional identity, but rather through turning the gaze of inquiry on to the 'totality of life'. The first questions are not 'How do I teach and why do I teach like this?', but rather 'Who have I (we) become and why have I (we) become like this?' In Freudian terms, we may say that in the name of 'life' they had, through their participation in the SAT programme, explicitly turned their attention onto the manifestations of the 'death drive' within them, the ways in which their "psychic apparatus is subordinated to a blind automatism of repetition" (Žižek, 2008, xxvii).

Nieves' first reaction to the negativity buried within her *modus operandi* (what she calls her "mask of absolute happiness, of everything is ok, the mask of greyness") is to fight its terrifying dimensions. But she soon "reconciles" herself to the lie as having been necessary to her survival, fundamental to her life ("it has got me to here, and now we are a little friendly ... I even have some tender feelings towards it."). Nieves, it appears, is articulating a new *modus vivendi* that neither rejects her compulsion to service, nor is happy to tolerate the continued sovereignty of this strategy for achieving a sense belonging. Nieves is now able, conceptually at least, to hold simultaneously in the frame of her subjectivity not just the awareness of

the existence of a 'mask', but also the knowledge of "the cost and advantage of not listening to myself".

The fact that professional identity can be so conditioned by the individual's psychic boundaries is deeply problematic for the dominant discourses of education, especially for a humanist-positivist understanding of education's unlimited potential. Not least, it represents a seemingly intractable problem at the heart of the competence discourse of 'good teaching' which would move teachers towards a living embodiment of a prescribed and learnable set of beliefs and practices. But teachers' interpretations of their role can be deeply problematic for teachers also. The narrative evidence shows that the idiosyncratic component of teacher identity is often an imposition of prior learning on the possibilities of the present, an extension of unconscious compulsion rather than empowered free choice. Juan was horrified to realize that the automatism of his irreverent joking had turned him into a "clown", entertaining perhaps, but not to be trusted or truly valued. Nieves came upon herself as a kind of "automaton", as "a mask" looking out on the other. Nieves and Juan have stumbled upon the horror and poverty of their own interpretation of teaching, and its secret motivations.

All of the teachers interviewed had, to a lesser or greater extent, experienced the 'shock' of seeing themselves as different than how they had imagined. A degree of (self)deceit was common, from Yvete, who believed herself to be the embodiment of affection for her colleagues, to Cecilia, who believed she spoke for intellectual objectivity in arguing with colleagues for the implementation of her ideas. It is this blindness to self that means the reflexive turn could be regarded as indispensable to teacher development or training. Moore includes the reflexivity project as necessary to initial teacher education, claiming that such a project permits students "to reflect critically on continuing experience in themselves", and "to contextualise these experiences within previous experiences" (Moore, 2004, p.144). Understanding travels in two directions: firstly, from the outside to the inside through examining "the way in which a personal life can be penetrated by the social and the practical" (Thomas, 1995, p.5); and secondly, from the inside out by making sense of "prior and current life experiences in the context of the personal as it influences the professional" (Cole and Knowles, 1995, p.130). As

Moore makes clear, these moves can shift the teacher toward an interrogation of *desire* within practice, and situate the teacher within the potentiality of unreason and vulnerability. Whilst some authors (Hargreaves, 1994; McLaren, 1996; Boler, 1999) embrace this as a necessary recognition of the reality of professional life, Moore also sees dangers in slipping toward ‘amateur psychoanalysis’ or the pathologization of the individual teacher above the “macro blot” (Bernstein, 2000) of the system (Moore, 2004, p.145).

Moore is clearly talking here about reflexivity as it has been practised in some ‘progressive’ training programmes for teachers, in which reflexivity is embedded in and around the activity of teaching. As a cautionary note within this context, Moore cites Sigmund Freud’s observation that it “will be enough if [his student of psychoanalysis] learns something *about* psychoanalysis and something *from* it” (Freud in *ibid.*, Moore’s emphasis). A reflexivity that tiptoes around the discourses of the psy-sciences can be seen to be limited by a lack of *felt* understanding capable re-situating the individual within an act of transformation, an unstoppable ‘insight’, a Deleuzean line of flight, a leap of faith. Personality theory as expounded by Naranjo, and Mezirow’s ‘schematic subject’, all present the subject as resistant to ‘seeing’ reality fully, even their own. Reflexivity, as a lay practice, still leaves us with the question of *who* is it that is being reflexive? To gain a transformative perspective on the eye that sees, or the voice that narrates our lives, it might be necessary to find another viewpoint, another eye, and this, perhaps requires a deep commitment to the pursuit of self-knowledge.

Anthony Giddens defines the “reflexive project of the self” as consisting “in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives” (1991, p.5), a definition that could include almost anyone. Moore qualifies this loose definition by stipulating that reflexivity should be “authentically and constructively critical” and “challenging rather than confirmatory” (2004, p.142). Furthermore, this critical and challenging reflexivity should “use the past” (Mitchell and Weber, 1991) as a means to “promoting better understandings of the present and perhaps promoting more rewarding futures” (Moore, 2004, p.142). The question is not so much whether Moore is correct in making this qualification of Giddens; rather, the question is, assuming he is correct, how can we ensure that such a reflexivity is

occurring. Here, one's answer depends on the degree of faith placed in the human subject's ability to be objective about their own experience and agency. Positivists, in this regard would see the gift of reason as sufficient to the task of thinking 'outside the box', whilst sceptics might regard this reason as caught in its own labyrinth, and unavailable to the bigger picture of 'objectivity'. Can we, by an act of will and discernment, from within our 'normal' thinking and activity, gain access to the bigger picture which will allow us to contextualize our immediate experience? Such access is vital to the project of reflexivity:

[W]ithin reflexivity, that which is being evaluated or reflected upon (that 'part of the picture') is not treated as if it were the whole of the picture, but is made sense of by reference to what is happening in the rest of the larger picture ... This suggests that as a prerequisite for reflexivity the practitioner is aware of the existence of that bigger picture in the first place, as well as of its potential significance and value. Furthermore, as Hartley (1997, p.79) has argued, it includes an understanding of – and a willingness to engage with – issues of desire in that bigger picture: 'the desire of the teacher to teach' and 'the desire of the learner to learn.' Hartley agrees with McWilliam's assessment (McWilliam, 1995) that this is "a 'risky' discourse," recognizing that "its initial effect is to disrupt and to look beneath the cool surface of the smug sensibilities of classroom competences on the part of both teacher and pupils"; however, he implies long term benefits in such disruptions, both for the teacher and for the taught (Moore, 2004, pp.149-150).

If reflexivity is assumed as "a 'risky' discourse", then the *radical* reflexivity of this study might be considered to amplify that risk. It is, perhaps, a move, an amplification, that would raise loud alarm bells for Kathryn Ecclestone and Dennis Hayes, authors of a strident critique of what they see as a burgeoning 'therapy culture'. Entitled *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education* (2009), its authors warn of the dangers of cultivating an impotent and de-politicized subject of education through a generalization across the school population of the vulnerable condition of a "diminished self" (p.146). This "diminished self" is none other than the 'poor, suffering client' as seen through the eyes of the psychotherapist:

The paradox of therapeutic education, as we have argued, is that an obsession with the self means that you will not change the world, and nor will you change yourself: it is active engagement in the world that leads to confidence, self-esteem, fulfilment, or, to use the latest piece of therapy-speak, 'happiness and well-being'. The wish and will to

change the world characterises humanity: to turn humanity inwards is to diminish all our selves. (ibid., p.164)

The last line of their extensive critique concludes: "What makes humanity is the intellectual and an education based on *cogito ergo sum* not *sentio ergo sum*". Whilst Ecclestone and Hayes are strident in their criticism, they also recognize "the need for empirical study of the effects of therapeutic education on teachers' and students' attitudes to learning and education" (ibid., p.147). At first glance the results of this empirical study would seem to confirm Ecclestone and Hayes' nightmare scenario of a group of professionals brought low by unnecessary and destructive self-analysis and a corresponding assumption of their fallibility. Even where there is a superficial confidence, teachers exposed to the 'discourse of diminishment' reveal themselves to be more fragile than they appear. Irene, for example, has learnt to admit that her compulsion to communicate control and security at all times ("I have to give the impression of competence") masks a permanent sensation of insecurity similar to that of Erendida. It turns out that far from being the 'competent' professional, Irene often feels out of her depth.

All of the narratives testify to a learning that has initiated a 'fall from grace' and an explicit recognition of limitations and error. Yet if Ecclestone and Hayes might be disturbed by the seduction of such a discourse of diminishment, a deification of 'poor me', two points can be made in defence of a recognition and embrace of teachers' fallibility and inexperience, of their being almost always 'out of there depth':

1. Irene's admission of her insecurity, for example, is in keeping with the pre-condition of education itself; if there did not exist a prior lack, an 'ignorance', there would be nothing to learn: "Were children born physically, intellectually and socially mature, there would be no education" (Bernfeld, 1973, p.31). Nor is there any reason to presume that "maturity" is reached at a particular age. Ecclestone and Hayes could be regarded as demonstrating a certain tendentiousness when they conflate with diminishment an admission of not having yet arrived at perfection, of not being wholly exemplary. Within the genre of tragedy, the claim to perfection is tantamount to hubris, and those that inhabit such self-belief are often ripe for being knocked down a peg or two. It is the function of tragedy to show that

we more often than not contain within us flaws and misconceptions whose ramifications might overturn our world, and thus to demonstrate to us that we never finish learning. King Lear was not above becoming 'diminished' by comparison with his inflated self-opinion at the outset of the play. Ironically, it is the mis-recognition of his majesty and power, and his resulting bombast that Lear reveals the seed of his subsequent diminishment, his humiliation at the hands of his dissembling older daughters.

The critical issue for Irene was not the knowledge or admission of vulnerability, but the consequences of the full incorporation of this 'other' self. The question is: What does Irene do with this information? Lorena, for example, turned towards those parts of her self-other relations that are most repellent to her when she acknowledged her dependency upon the gaze of the other, and how this anxiety made her invasive of her students and invaded by the expectations of their parents and the school. But her vulnerability is not the equivalent of victimhood, or the loss of a "robust and confident sense of human possibility" as Ecclestone and Hayes (2009, p.146) imply; rather, new knowledge, perception, and understanding, she says, have fostered a new responsibility. What awaits Lorena now is the task of *knowing what to do*. Her paralysis does not result from diminished possibilities, but from the recognition of an *excess* of possibility. Asked which of her behaviours had become problematized, she responds "when I don't stop". Not being able to stop, being over-intense, over-engaged, over-demanding, is symptomatic that she has lost her "centre". But as well as wanting to overcome vulnerability, it seems Lorena feels the need to remain connected to its difficult knowledge; to make her peace with this antithesis of our contemporary Zeitgeist. "Calm yourself, relax" are her injunctions to herself ("and there is a point, yes, where I let myself go and ... and I relax").

Something here resonates with Blake *et al.*'s (2000) assertion that the "dominance of procedural reasoning and performativity is symptomatic of a thinning of our ethical lives"³⁴ (p.96). Furthermore, as antidote to this cultural thrust, Blake *et al.*

³⁴ By which we are perhaps meant to understand that it is the ambiguities and vagaries of non-linear ethical problematization that gives rise to a depth and richness of experience and perhaps a 'quality' of character.

invite us to resist “a hasty move towards explanation and the suppression of the unknown” (ibid.). Naranjo also stresses the path of no-action as a pedagogy. To this end he quotes the Zen teacher Shrinryu Suzuki Roshi: “Just to sit may be the most difficult thing. To work on something is not difficult; but not to work on anything at all is rather difficult” (Naranjo, 1974, p.145). Is Lorena’s tentative exploration of relaxation indicative of a *fattening* of her ethical life, a positive exercise of Zen-like restraint rather than omission? If such relaxation keeps the unknown open, and involves letting her overbearing drive for resolution fall away, what is it that will appear from this ‘wait and see’? Semetsky’s juxtaposition of Deleuze and Dewey is particularly interesting on this question of delay whilst absorbed within a situation’s totality:

It is the totality of experience that emits signs, which by necessity exceed any pre-given system of significations. Conscious decision-making will be deferred for a moment because the state of mind is as yet pre-reflective: “we *de-fer* conclusion in order to *in-fer* more thoroughly” (Dewey, 1991, p.108). We remember that Deleuze, asserting the production of subjectivity as unfolding and its reworking through knowledge and power, said that such a deferment would make a line [of flight] effectively fold into a spiral. (Semetsky, 2006, p.40)

This spiral “means organization at a new level of complexity, therefore more refined inference and more complex meaning and understanding” (Ibid.). Lorena’s suspicion of her own compulsion to ‘not stop’ would seem to accord with the possibility of a Deweyan virtue in deferral. Lorena wants to be able to pause, to defer her own compulsion to interfere and to act.

2. Perhaps even more important than her ‘virtuous’ deferral, Lorena’s admission of still needing “to learn so much” creates a powerful connection with her own students. It echoes the child’s grappling to position themselves in the world somewhere between what they desire it to be (fantasy) and how it argues itself to be in reality, as contestation. This is the child caught between a conviction of centrality and omnipotence, and a growing anxiety surrounding “the frustration of insignificance” (Aldo Carotenuto, quoted in Britzman, 1998, p.25). For Nietzsche, heroic maturity involves overcoming this frustration, or what he calls “*ressentiment*”, by the “discovery of the special value of what is near to us” (Blake *et al.*, 2000, p.75)

My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be other than it is, not in the future, not in the past, not in all eternity. Not merely to bear what is, to endure that which happens of necessity ... but *love* it. (Nietzsche, quoted in *ibid.*)

Lorena's acceptance of being 'incomplete' involves on one level an *amor fati* as a sinking into the truth of one's situation, no matter how uncomfortable. Lorena is learning to sustain these uncomfortable truths. Similarly, Naranjo draws on the Buddhist philosophical tradition when he says that whilst practising meditation "it is especially useful to direct your attention toward your discomfort, in place of falling into the temptation of searching for a better place, a happier, more ideal state" (2004, p.287). Dewey echoes this pragmatic turn, framing it as a "religious reorientation" (not to be confused with the institution of religion) that

brings forward the sense of security and stability by virtue of creating a better and more enduring adjustment to real life circumstances and situations. New values are created so as to help in carrying one through the frequent moments of desperation or depression and not submitting to fatalistic resignation. (Semetsky, 2006, p.105)

Lorena had retreated from the knowledge/interpretation of rejection and the learning this might bring. In its place she was fully engaged in the work of manipulating herself and others into an obligation to 'love'. Her difficulty in relaxing this compulsion causes suffering ("I have to relax, but it's hard for me to relax [laughter], and that makes me sad, but it's a sadness that I am ..."). To attain peace, she needs to learn "compassion", and how "to stop and wait, to know how to wait. Things come. Calmness."

Lorena's situation speaks of an expansive opening up of affect and percept as a developmental necessity. But, this is not just a step forward toward adult maturity, it is, paradoxically, a step back toward the maturities of childhood:

The saying goes that children are natural philosophers, precisely because children have *affects* and *percepts* ... in abundance, and here are we, adults, children no more, whose routine *conceptual* thinking has been reduced to the level [...] of solely instrumental rationality [...]. (Semetsky, 2006, p.52)

When Lorena talks about returning to her "centre", it seems probable that she means returning her attention to her abundance of *affects* and *percepts*, a deferred point of departure for a continual communication with otherness. This return, she

feels, is possible, and where it exists it can “spread to” the students. Although she has only experienced short moments or “flashes” where this has occurred, these have convinced her that such interiority manifests itself in “harmonious work, peace. There is better learning [...] and there is respect”. Whilst this sounds formulaic, Lorena provides idiosyncratic evidence in commenting that where such contact exists:

[E]ven the tone of voice is different. [...] Everything is different, even the way of holding a pencil is different. Yes, and it's nothing, it is this 'click'. And a lot of teachers have had this 'click', but then (and I include myself) we lose ourselves in doing. (Lorena)

Lorena in such a moment is receptive as opposed to performative and open as opposed to forcing open. What elevates the moment is not the singularity of the student's holding of the pencil, it is the perception/creation of this singularity in the perceptive field of Lorena. With singularity of this “click” comes wonder, and perhaps what Naranjo (1974) talks of as the “beginner's mind” of Zen, the unknowing freshness of things coming together as if for the first time.

By dwelling on the testimony of Lorena I hope to have illustrated a common theme within the narratives. A psychologically and spiritually informed work of self-knowledge, even where this requires a ‘fall from grace’, proves itself to be fertile ground for reconstituting the teacher as a radical learner. The radical learning of ‘who I am’ would seem to transpose itself naturally and inevitably into what are, for each teacher, important revisions and experiments within teacher identity, within doing. The inward movement, criticized as ‘indulgent’ by Ecclestone and Hayes, rebounds outwards into new ways of perceiving and enacting action. The learning around identity that occurs is most powerful for the fact that it is idiosyncratic and is not beholden to a ‘one size fits all’ proposal for what ‘needs to be done’. The commonality of this learning, if it is useful to name it, is in the experience of learning itself, an opening up to the anxiety and joy of the unfinished business of life and the knowledge that ‘reality’ exceeds our expectations. By such means, teachers involved in an investigation of their own ‘living death’ can be said to reconnect with the *modus vivendi* of education itself and thus, like Fernando, experience a “re-enchantment” (Bhaskar, 2002) with teaching and learning.

Chapter 13: The Arts of Getting By?

Just as Igor's testimony shows how he sought to render his students inanimate through classroom control and curriculum prescriptions, education itself might be accused of 'sanitizing' teachers in professional and ethical discourses of good teaching. In this discursive matrix, parallels can be drawn between the 'fate' of the teacher and Foucault's portrayal of the traditional historian:

The demagogue denies the body to secure the sovereignty of a timeless idea, and the historian effaces his [sic] proper individuality so that others may enter the stage and reclaim their own speech. He is divided against himself: forced to silence his preferences and overcome his distaste, to blur his own perspective and replace it with the fiction of a universal geometry, to mimic death in order to enter the kingdom of the dead, to adopt a faceless anonymity. In this world where he has conquered his individual will, he becomes a guide to the inevitable law of a superior will. (Foucault, 1991, pp.91–92)

The situation that Foucault identifies as the tragedy of the historian finds an echo in the teachers' necessary accommodations within 'the system', and especially with what Moore and Edwards (2002) have described as the "pragmatic turn" within teacher identity development. Moore and Edwards' *Professional Identities Project* located four kinds of pragmatism within the testimonies of their interviewees – the contingent, the discursive, the strategic and the principled. According to Moore, these pragmatic nuances, often coexisting within the same teacher identity across time, share a commonality in that they

(...) led the practitioner towards an orientation whereby they were able to occupy as it were a floating practical/ideological platform that shuttled back and forth between progressive and traditional orientations, enabling possible future re-migrations to these positions but also providing a 'third place' which had the capacity to become a more lasting pedagogical home. For some (particularly those I shall refer to as principled pragmatists and as discursive pragmatists), occupation of this middle ground was relatively comfortable, and indeed may have been undertaken in order to circumvent the problems of occupying (or continuing to occupy) a more 'extreme' pedagogical, ideological or philosophical position. For others (in particular, those I have identified as contingent pragmatists),

occupation of the middle ground was far less comfortable, though still a necessary price to pay for professional survival. (Moore, 2004, p.131)

As the name suggests, what is central to all manifestations of the pragmatic turn is the placement of value on a notion of 'what works', on where effort can be applied to maximum effect, where costs can be reduced and gains maximized. It presupposes an economy of effort, and as such has much in common with the principles of 'economy' that lie within Foucault's description of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1991, pp.206-213). This emphasis on productive efficiency is most evident where pragmatism blurs toward dogmatism and the discursive, and thus "deflects pedagogic activity away from its political, socially oriented aspects too far towards an emphasis on the methodological and the practical" (Moore, 2004, p.138). Moore cites Dewey's dictum (1938, p.10) that "any theory and set of practices is dogmatic which is not based upon critical examination of its underlying principles", which means:

(...) we may need to be particularly concerned when pragmatism – adopted as a 'theory and set of practices' – excuses itself from such internal investigation purely on the grounds of its own self-validating fundamentalism: that is to say, on the basis that it is inevitably and intrinsically good since it avoids the taking up of (inevitably bad) 'extreme' positions. (Moore, 2004, p.138)

Of all the narratives in this research, Cecilia's perhaps comes closest to a movement from an 'extreme' progressive position to a pragmatic position in which she no longer opposes the 'system' wholesale, but finds and accommodates her own freedoms within a given space. Whilst we might lament the implied reduction in her aspirations for education, and for her role in education, we cannot help but concur with her sense that the cost to her of maintaining her total opposition would have been too high, not least because she had become aware of her desire to occupy a more traditional authority in the classroom. Yes, Cecilia has been overtly "de-politicized" (Moore, 2004, p.139) by her pragmatism, but yet she seems to have found a professional *modus vivendi* that is satisfying and meaningful to her, one that has allowed her to remain a viable classroom teacher after 30 years at the 'chalk face'.

It seems, also, that Cecilia has not made that ultimate accommodation to an ideological or discursive pragmatism in as much as she can make a clear

distinction between her own goals and objectives and those of the wider educational culture. She is not a 'defender' of performativity *per se*, but she is interested in how she herself can get the job done in the knowledge that she occupies the 'no man's land' of the teacher, between the rock of the students, and the hard place of the law and policy. Nor is Cecilia's pragmatism contingent, tied to temporary circumstances in the environment; rather, she has appeared to have built a "durable" and singular practice "deliberately and proactively" (ibid., p.134), which, according to Moore is characteristic of a principled pragmatism. However, given Cecilia's bellicose history, given her oppositional roots, and her self-conscious embedding in relations of power, it might be more productive to situate her pragmatic turn as owing much to what Moore refers to as *strategic* pragmatism. Although Moore describes strategic pragmatism as more prevalent among educational managers and leaders, there is much in Cecilia's report of the development of her teacher identity to indicate that her pragmatism is an exercise in pedagogic leadership in the immediacy of her classroom, and that she *strategically* situates herself within power as a trade-off between capitulation and self-determination; i.e. she 'plays the game' but still manages to set at least some of her terms of engagement. Within this trade off, there can be no winner, the most Cecilia can hope for is a permanent stand-off, a tolerance of the tensions within an unending antagonism. Should the spaces for self-determination that she has located be shut down by 'the system', she would have to review her strategy.

If this notion of pragmatism and its nuances is a useful lens through which to view teacher identity development, there is perhaps something in teacher identity that it is unable to capture. This is precisely because pragmatism is almost automatically associated with a robust and phlegmatic activity. It implies the solving of problems in a realistic way, in line with present conditions. In this sense, it is important to distinguish between pragmatism's positive connotations and the possibility of a negative pragmatism, perhaps more akin to *expediency*. Whilst pragmatism is evident in the narratives of this study, it is expediency, with its associations of an improper convenience or a displacement of the problem more than a full engagement, that would appear to be more of a concern. Britzman's phrase, "getting by" (1998, p.24) would seem to come closer to this other *negative*

turn in identity. According to Britzman, it is the worry over the failings inherent in this “getting by” that has “overwhelmed educational discourse”, presumably with the rise of the culture of accountability and performativity (nobody is allowed to ‘get by’, they must succeed). This now intolerable *modus (no)vivendi* of ‘getting by’ refers us to the marginal identities that Britzman associates with learners, but it could equally well describe teachers:

(...) such familiar strategies as slipping between the cracks of attention, doing just enough so as not to draw attention to oneself, doing less than what might be done, squeaking by, indeed making oneself disappear right before the teacher’s eyes [student’s/authority’s eyes]. These furtive movements, might be thought of as the learner’s [teacher’s] means to defend herself or himself against the demands of [...]educators [students/authorities] or, more pertinently, against the demands of learning [teaching]. (Britzman, 1998, p.24)

This description brings to mind not only the teachers interviewed in this study, but also the ever-present backdrop to the narratives which is formed by that mass of ‘failing’, ‘disaffected’ teachers whose professional objective has been reduced to survival - not pragmatic professional survival, but the more forlorn and lonely survival of a (ghost of) self. These are the ‘pitiable’ colleagues of Igor, Erendida, Fernando, Cecilia, and Nieves.

Furthermore, it is clear from the narratives that teachers expediently defend themselves from being overly exposed by and within a potentially ‘dangerous’ culture of education. Professional identities have been constructed in the full or half-knowledge of vulnerability, the knowledge that things best kept ‘secret’ threaten to spill out into the field of attention of students and colleagues. These are identities, therefore, in part constructed with the intention of avoiding these tragicomic accidents of visibility. In this sense, it is the lot of the self-respecting teacher to maintain an image, not limited to the ignominy of just survival or ‘getting by’, but of that phlegmatic robustness typical of the professional. In this *modus operandi* the overwhelming concern is to maintain the appearances of ‘self’, no matter what that ‘self’ is dedicated to.

That this operation of identity involves (self-)deception is clear from the narratives. On finishing her workshop, Erendida wants to know if her nervousness (i.e. fear) was noticeable to the group; Muriel, hyper-trained and prepared, was

adamant that “nobody will realize that I don’t know” (“and yet always with the feeling inside that I don’t know”); Fernando was outwardly cooperative and modest, but quietly aware of an inadmissible competitive rivalry; Cecilia, the young progressive, egalitarian teacher, had an inconvenient authoritarian and competitive streak; Carla exploded into a spiteful rage when the students made fun of her spelling mistake on the blackboard; Rebeca found herself being deliberately cruel and humiliating to a difficult student in front of the whole class; Reina hid the extremes of her self-opinion, oscillating between great superiority and great inferiority (“I had that feeling of monstrous, ugly things, things that had to be hidden, that nobody could see in me”); Nieves’ commitment and apparent humility of service contained a hidden scorn for her colleagues (“I do everything well, you don’t”); Yvete ‘mistook’ her intimidation for a caring attitude, and her colleagues’ compliance for agreement.

Monsters and ugly things: the narratives are full of candid admissions of dissembling, and of the expedience of a manipulated presentation of self. At the end of the day, these teachers are not what they appear. Above all, they should not be mistaken for ‘exemplary adults’ as conventionally framed figures beyond reproach. Irene, extremely image-conscious, is eloquent on this point:

I hide and repress, no? Like, I can’t reveal how I am in all situations, and often I am very conscious [of that] [...] how we live with our backs to ourselves [...]. I see through the eyes of everyone else and am very tuned into everyone else, so I don’t really live what is really mine, right? (Irene)

Nor is such expediency to be found only at the individual level; the narratives also expose a systemic expediency, perhaps best described by the notion of ‘simulation’. The themes of simulation in education are found, for example, in the experience of Erendida. In the following extract, she identifies her ‘lazy’ submission to a system operating under its own ‘false logic’:

I worked a lot under the inertia of what they said had to be - and sometimes they weren’t even well thought out recipes - it was just working according to a recipe but without all the necessary ingredients. (Erendida)

This short statement captures a characteristic predicament for teachers. The state, prescriptive and normative, details a compulsory course for teaching and learning,

perhaps without substantial or inclusive deliberation, but does not count on, or provide, the conditions in which this same course can be undertaken effectively. The teachers, muddling along, simulate compliance, the students simulate learning, and the state 'fabricates' a policy success story.

Yet we can see embedded in Erendida's statement a different truth in which all of the 'players' are rendered powerless by reality. The state's 'educational recipes' are unable to respond to the enormous social, economic and political complexities of schools and of teaching and learning. The 'inert' teacher succumbs to the realities of impotence, renouncing the effort implied in resistance and the struggle for freedom or greater self-determination. The sense of collective and individual failure is latent in Erendida's statement. It is the failure of inept imposition, and the failure of docile acceptance. Erendida's description of her condition evokes Foucault's "docile body" being spoon fed and in so doing renouncing its creative and transcendent potential, Nietzsche's "will to power". Rather, her "inertia", and the lack of positive engagement with reality that this idea evokes, brings us closer perhaps to a 'will to powerlessness'. Erendida goes on to explain how she perceives that the relationship between a state-sponsored simulation in education and this same 'will to powerlessness' constellates within and around what she describes as a (deliberately?) sub-standard initial and in-service training for teacher. This results in teachers being sent

to war without anything, even without shoes. And so along the way we take on the idea that we are absolutely useless. It seems to me that something like that is going on, and so each person [is left] to how he experiences the situation: some adjust, make themselves comfortable as it were, and others react, and others perhaps sink. I think it's part of the lack of recognition, of attention, of respect. (Erendida)

Erendida is obviously referring to Mexico, but her statement might equally resonate with teachers around the world. Erendida identifies a double-sided will to powerlessness. The government on the one hand actively disempowers teachers, both by setting the agenda, and by creating standards which belie reality. The teachers, on the other hand, renounce the possibility of revolt. Testimony from the Mexican interviewees implies that an accommodation to this situation is the norm. This accommodation would seem to involve either throwing oneself

wholeheartedly into the 'game,' usually including the union game, or settling into the law of least effort in a world essentially free from accountability and retribution. For those taking the latter route, power, or resistance, could be said to be exercised not through revolt, but through apathy. The government agenda is subverted not by opposition but by being defused or diluted at the point of delivery. The subjects' 'victory' over government is in *the freedom to pay only lip-service* to the official discourse, preserving the right to maintain alternative and parallel values. Igor testifies to this same culture amongst his colleagues:

I work in a government school, and in this school, because we have tenure, and a union that protects us, there is a lot of absenteeism, a lack of initiative. Logically, because the union is here they can't fire us easily. So, I don't arrive at work, and if I arrive, I sit down and don't do anything to change the reality. In my case it gets to me, and it affects me badly, and I do things to try and make changes. But many are sat in their places and don't want to move from there because they are comfortable, and why bother if they are only going to earn the same amount. I tell them that what they will gain is satisfaction, but there isn't anything of the kind [...] it's very mediocre, very conformist. (Igor)

It is hard to disagree with Igor's assessment of his colleagues 'mediocre' behaviour as 'conformist', especially if we take into consideration the possibility that, as Erendida observed, 'mediocrity' could be the hidden curriculum of the Mexican government (see quotation above). However, looked at from the lens of market democracies where the culture of performativity is now in place within schools, the possibility of a collective and permanent boycott of standards and procedures appears almost radical. It would appear that Mexican teachers, by virtue of their historical collective weight, are exempted from some of the greater incursions of state power into the lives of its subjects. In still being able to escape from the most rigorous demand for success that is the logic of the culture of performance and accountability, Mexican teachers might be said to still have access to a negative space in which negative freedom *from* the rigours of government, a freedom *to* fail, to lapse and to avoid, is still an option.

The arts of getting by: revisited

We witness here a strange and bewildering, even cynical, game of appearances played out in the mirrors of others. Such games can be seen as fundamentally ideological, even on the individual level through the manifestation of a 'singular' personality, or of a professional identity. Žižek's analysis of a cynical potential within ideology is relevant to this individual and collective culture of schooling, constructed with the apparent complicity of so many different actors:

The most elementary definition of ideology is probably the well-known phrase from Marx's *Capital*: '*Sie wissen das nicht, aber sie tun es*' – '*they do not know it, but they are doing it*'. The very concept of ideology implies a kind of basic, constitutive naiveté: the misrecognition of its own presuppositions, of its own effective conditions, a distance, a divergence between so-called social reality and our distorted representation, our false consciousness of it [...] the main point is to see how the reality itself cannot reproduce itself without this so-called ideological mystification. The mask is not simply hiding the real state of things; the ideological distortion is written into its very essence. (Žižek, 2008, pp.24-25)

The work, then, of the critical attitude is to undo the fiction of a continuous, smooth surface of reality that is ideology (personality?). Foucault's genealogical and archaeological methods represent just such an attempt to uncover our collective 'myths', and similarly, psychotherapy echoes this attempt at the individual level. But as Žižek makes clear, the 'reality' of post-ideological society, the society of "cynical reason" (op.cit.), and, by inference, the reality of modernity's new human species, the "psychological being" (Rose, 1996), means that the exposure of 'naïve consciousness' through critique is no longer sufficient. What is necessary is a re-engagement through *new* activity, new procedure, that can give form and content not only to knowledge but, perhaps more importantly, to *belief*.

It is the existence of the habitualized automaton (Pascal, 1966, p.274) that allows for the gap between what we 'know' and what we do, and thus for the possibility of Sloterdijk's "cynical reason" and an apparent flourishing of the "cynical subject" in post-ideological society (1998):

The cynical subject is quite aware of the distance between the ideological mask and social reality, but he [*sic*] nonetheless still insists upon the mask [...] Cynical reason is no longer naïve like the ideologue,

but is a paradox of an enlightened false consciousness: one knows the falsehood very well, one is well aware of a particular interest hidden behind an ideological universality, but still one does not renounce it. (Žižek, 2008, pp.25-26)

If this situation is worrying then it becomes more so when such cynicism is the *modus operandi* of a ruling culture. Such 'structural' cynicism is captured in the testimony of Erendida as the Mexican government's façade of quality and rigour, which, according to her interpretation, provides the glittering surface for a 'tolerance' of poor educational standards and the socio-political 'fruits' of a generalized level of 'ignorance'. Erendida's description would seem to conform to Žižek's assertion that:

This cynicism is not a direct position of immorality, it is more like morality itself put in the service of immorality – the model of cynical wisdom is to conceive probity, integrity, as a supreme form of dishonesty, and morals as a supreme form of profligacy, the truth as the most effective form of a lie. This cynicism is therefore a kind of perverted 'negation of negation' of the official ideology. (Žižek, 2008, p.26)

Bearing this situation in mind, it would seem that any "re-enchantment" (Bhaskar, 2002) with education, with teaching and learning, would necessarily need to address this 'negation of negation', or the negation of a negativity, that is cynicism's great deceit. For this reason, the appearance of the principle and practice of a Foucauldian *truth-telling* in the narratives is highly significant when juxtaposed with the duplicity that is prevalent in the pre-SAT 'universe' of these teachers. Teachers who have spent years learning to 'get by' through complicity, deception and evasion, post-SAT are beginning to consider the cost of their 'dishonesty' as too high, and are attempting to build a practice of truth-telling by which they might re-new a sense of integrity. Rebeca, for example, has, post-SAT, begun to radically re-think herself in relation to power. At the heart of her shift is a transcendence of the cultural norm of remaining silent. This involves an overcoming of fear, caution and mistrust of *speaking out*. Rebeca describes how during her career she had always found speaking her mind with colleagues particularly challenging; she avoided 'rocking the boat', preferring to defer to the dominant culture of duplicity and/or non-engagement with conflict. Post-SAT she has begun to find the means by which to enact her own voice, to transgress and

transcend a silence that had previously made her complicit with a certain way of doing and hence being:

I didn't know what was happening, but I did see it as something strange and it made me feel, I'm not sure if it was ashamed, I didn't know how to explain it. So, obviously, with the SAT I did come to understand a little better, and yes, I have changed my attitude as of two years ago. Like, for example, in speaking out a little [...] In ten years I had never intervened in the general meetings, something that is very significant, and suddenly my first intervention was two years ago. It was to complain, to say that I was not feeling at all comfortable. (Rebeca)

Interestingly, Rebeca points to particular activity within the SAT programme as providing her with the experience that enabled her to understand the difference between any particular reaction as originating in an event itself, as a consequence, or as originating the perception of that event. This is the difference between "You are pressuring me" and "I feel pressured". Through this move, Rebeca has been learning to take responsibility for her thoughts and feelings, and this acceptance of responsibility has brought with it greater liberty of expression:

If *I feel pressured* there I am taking responsibility, and that is undeniable because that's how I feel, and so I can share it so that someone else can understand how I feel without them feeling attacked [...] In my case, what I said was that I felt very unhappy with the final baccalaureate evaluations, and that was like a kind of earthquake. (Rebeca)

Another curious detail of Rebeca's uncomfortable truth-telling is that she had previously gone to warn the head teacher that she was intending to bring up this point in the upcoming staff meeting. She saw this as an attempt to defuse any possible interpretation of this uncomfortable or dangerous truth as a surprise attack on management. Though she will not be dissuaded by the head from pressing forward with her personalized observation, it is obvious that she is anxious to avoid falling into oppositional or provocative games of power. Rather, she would appear to be interested in the power of truth itself, independent of its ownership.

So, in her practice, Rebeca has identified a key question that Foucault signals as essential to the power games of modernity and governmentality: the access to truth. Power and government are, for Foucault, created and patrolled through claims to truth, a truth established through an 'objective' or cynical rationality.

Such truths, constructed through 'knowledge' of the social territory, inevitably disempower the individual in as much as they do not have at their disposal anything more than their limited perception of events, they cannot generate any totalizing truths and so are unable to describe reality. Rebeca's new-found strategy is to establish an alternative claim to truth based on her own experience of herself. Its power is that it is indisputable, and as such can provide legitimate grounds to enter into fields of uncertainty or into potential conflict with other truths.

We find one other important example within Rebeca's narrative of what might approximate to a moment of "total transfiguration": having entered into a conflict with a difficult student in which she had felt herself to have reacted harshly, upsetting him in front of other students, she resolved to apologize to him:

Afterwards I spoke to my colleagues, saying, 'So, I apologized and we did such and such,' and so they said, 'What! Are you stupid! How could that even occur to you!? And I thought, 'I feel more at peace now.' And this, I think is a result of the SAT – that I dared to talk to him directly in that way, in a sense I was showing him my vulnerability, the fact that he can make me feel bad. I told him that clearly! And he understood perfectly! And what's more, he responded very well, and then I felt even better.
(Rebeca)

Rebeca has effectively made explicit the permanent provocations within the games of power of classrooms: students' resistance not only disrupts progress, it also undermines the authority and the comfort of the teacher; and likewise, teachers may abuse power and hurt, offend, humiliate and marginalize students. The reaction of her colleagues would indicate that this central experience of teaching, and of teachers' and students' power-impotence, is not generally open to explicit discussion between the opposing forces. Stereotypically, power is maintained in the classroom through a measured use of coercion/persuasion and the appearance of imperturbability, strength and resilience. But in the case of Rebeca, a dangerous truth – her own vulnerability – has assumed, perhaps momentarily, a power greater than the structures that contain and constrain it.

We can detect at the heart of this example of 'transfiguration' the possibility of an encounter with an ethical authority founded and dependent upon truth telling. The importance of the production and ownership of truth in Foucault's thinking cannot

be overestimated. He even goes so far as to determine the challenge for the intellectual as the constitution of a new politics of truth:

The problem is not changing people's consciousness – or what is in their heads – but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth [...] The political question, to sum up, is not error, illusion, alienated consciousness, or ideology; it is truth itself. (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, pp.74–75)

We might suggest that the *production* of truth as 'knowledge' is not perhaps the issue with these teachers for whom truth-telling is becoming a compelling ethos. What is certainly the case is that these teachers are challenging how truth is being represented in schools. The power games in schools are underscored by a particular way of representing reality. What is officially occurring in this reality is determined by what is said and what is left unsaid. What we see in the case of these teachers is a new-found impulse to communicate the incommunicable of experience, to point to 'the elephant in the room', to talk about what is happening, and in so doing they represent a new challenge to the *status quo*, both for their colleagues and for their students. Once more, Foucault is categorical in his assertion that a technology of truth banished from our scientific culture is precisely concerned with what is happening at any one time, rather than what *is* as unchanging and eternally true:

One may suppose in our civilization a whole technology of truth that scientific practice has step-by-step discredited, covered up, and driven out. The truth here does not belong to the order of that which is, but rather of that which happens: it is an event. (Miller, 1993, p.271)

We may suppose that the SAT programme, with its transversal emphasis on experience and on the here and now, might cultivate a renewed attention to this parallel and subversive truth located in the description of what is happening. Naranjo's ethos with respect to psychotherapy's search for truth is inspired by Fritz Perl's elaboration of the a-theoretical experientialism he called Gestalt therapy. Irene, for example, describes how she has begun to disrupt the ordinary dynamic of class control with her young students – involving the standard combination of persuasion and reprimand – with an open 'confession' of her own emergent feelings about what is or isn't occurring with the group. So, for example, she may openly declare herself to be angry, or to be sad. It is the irruption in the

here and now of a different perspective on truth, on what is important and permissible in the teacher-learner relationship. This new 'technique' produces a certain degree of shock in Irene's students. Her emotional truth breaks through from a parallel world, a world that is ever present but rarely referred to. Irene notes that whilst emotional life is mostly downplayed in schools, certain emotions are actively censored. We can identify here one of the effects of modernity's regime of truth – that truth is the fruit of reason and therefore incompatible with and threatened by emotion (especially so called 'negative' emotions) and corporality (especially sensuality). There are always, then, two or more worlds in the classroom: the world of teaching and learning, and the world of what Foucault termed the *bios philosophicos*, the animality of being human. It is radically and graphically juxtaposed in the sprawling energy of playtime, "life in its chaotic pre-personal flux" (Miller, 1993, p.347), and the invested intentionality of docile bodies sitting at their desks waiting to be directed by the teacher. Indeed, we might argue, in the way of Bhaskar (2002), that the order of teaching and learning precisely depends upon the vital energy of children and the young. We find, then, in the organization of schools a schism between 'nature' and 'nurture' equivalent to that which Nietzsche observed occurring in the individual: "All instincts that do not discharge themselves outwardly turn inward. Thus it was that man first developed what was later called his 'soul'" (Miller, 1994, p.217). If the school and the classroom have a 'soul', it is perhaps the product of this permanent provocation between the explicit and the hidden, the favoured and the disfavoured, played out year after year between students, teachers, management, parents, and government.

Whilst truth-telling within this permanent provocation may well offer the possibility of a new therapeutic authority or *ethos* for the teacher, it is not without its dangers. All the 'truth-tellers' mentioned, perhaps with the exception of Igor, are obviously cautious, aware that there are dangers. Irene believes that sharing her emotional 'truth' with her young students can only be effective if used sparingly. She appears to link its value not to an innate quality, but rather as a contrast to normality. For Irene such truth works because it shocks. Likewise, Rebeca is aware that there are risks involved in sticking her neck out, in being

different as a teacher, and in pointing to 'reality' in staff meetings. Dora repeatedly refers her radical vision of a new way of working to the approval of her boss. It is obvious that where an energy for change asserts itself, this generates both excitement and anxiety. It brings with it the promise of a practice of liberation, or a vindication of the 'human', but at the same time this is infused with doubt and fear: Am I right? Am I justified? What events might unravel? How might I be punished or humiliated? In taking control or responsibility, how might I lose control or have my responsibility called to account? Furthermore, and most importantly, if truth-telling can involve accusation, a pointing of the finger, a denouncement, a rigorous questioning, this gesture, this attitude necessarily involves the truth-teller in being held to account themselves: 'Those who throw stones', as the proverb goes, 'should not live in glass houses'. We can see this clearly in the testimony of Cecilia, who, at the beginning of her career, had believed herself to be a truth-teller aligned against a retrograde and oppressive system. Her denunciation of traditional authority, her sensitivity to the guises of authoritarianism, throws up the mirror to her own authoritarian tendencies as a teacher. By this means she is brought face to face with a more uncomfortable truth, that of her own 'involvement' in games of power, and her 'need' of authority. This retroflexive movement in Cecilia is presaged by Foucault's valuation of truth-telling:

The main effect of this *parrhesiastic* struggle with power is not to bring the interlocutor to a new truth, or to a new level of self awareness; it is to lead the interlocutor to *internalize* this parrhesiastic struggle – to fight with himself against his own faults. (Miller, 1994, p.361)

A Foucauldian truth-telling, in this light, is, perhaps, a viable antidote to the cynicism that Žižek points to as central to our experience of modernity. It represents an act of faith in the possibility of unmanipulated relations between and within subjects, and embodies a belief that community and the subject can withstand an uncomfortable multiplicity of truths. Such truth-telling, as a resistance to the 'ugliness' and 'corruption' of (self)deceit, takes its place within an aestheticism, in which 'Truth is beauty, beauty truth', and could be said to play a part in transforming the 'getting by' into "the *arts* of getting by" that Britzman places so painfully at the centre of a multiplicity of self and other relations to be

lived and deciphered within education. Indeed, Britzman asks us to consider a search for our own answers (truths) within the experiences of education:

What, in education, do the arts of getting by mean to that other art, the art of learning [teaching]? How do learners [teachers] work through, and get stuck in, all the conflictive representations and theories of learning [teaching] offered by the course of their life in education? What obscure relations work within the capacity to think, to live, to love, and to dream as if learning [teaching] were the self's own work of art? (Britzman, 1998, pp.23-24)

We can suppose that learning to shine the light of awareness into these "obscure relations" is the work of attempting to construct a sense and experience of subjective truth, but this learning is not enough, we must learn, as some of the teachers of this study are learning, to communicate this truth. In this way the subject, the identity of the teacher, like a work of art, might learn to stand unashamedly for itself.

Chapter 14: Great Expectations?

Besley and Peters (2007, p.133) identify the following characteristics of liberal government according to a Neo-Foucauldian approach: it is not an ideology or political philosophy or economic theory, but rather a form of governmentality focused on how power is exercised; it demonstrates a self-limiting state through the encouragement of self-government; it represents *an intensification of an economy of moral regulation* first developed by the liberals; and it develops the relationship between expertise and politics, to be seen in a proliferation of the actuarial rationality, the prudentialism of purchaser-provider, and the audit, performance, and risk management cultures.

The evidence of Mexican teachers would indicate that much of this apparatus of governmentality is not yet fully in place, and, where it does exist, is faced with a counter-culture whose origins can possibly be traced to Mexico's colonial history, the 1910 Revolution and consequent domination in the 20th Century of a one-party state. Under these circumstances it is only to be expected that different values and technologies of power were developed in order to regulate the individual's relationship to governmentality. Evidence from the narratives would seem to confirm that, even today, Mexican teachers have a different relationship to power than that experienced by teachers in advanced market democracies. We see some evidence of this in the description of the work culture offered by Igor. Firstly, many of Igor's colleagues, indeed perhaps the vast majority, appear not to have internalized the self-regulated moral discourse of performativity. In stark contrast, Igor's description would indicate that they act in accordance with a parallel 'norm', or work culture, perhaps encouraged by the teachers' union. They are conspicuously not 'normalized' by the explicit discourse of government and of modernity's championing of self-regulation and of professional expertise within the disciplines. If self-regulation is occurring, it is perhaps with other, amoral and a-professional aims in mind, for example, with a view to maintaining a network of 'useful' relationships with influential figures in the union and among the education authorities. Secondly, whilst modern government demands visibility, as

exemplified by Foucault's emblematic architecture of control, the Panopticon, these same teachers remain on the margins. Mediocrity, the failure to comply with the (explicit) 'norm', is education's best known secret, the skeleton in the cupboard, and up until now the authorities, as Fernando confirms in his withering analysis of teachers' failings, have been unable/unwilling to press home the administrative route against even blatant under-performance.

Erendida, however, does not see much freedom in teachers' accommodation within the existing system. Rather, she diagnoses a lack of responsibility:

The thing is that now we have fallen into a type of negative energetic circle that keeps going round and round and we can't find the way out. So, stemming from this, from the type of education that we've had, we don't make ourselves responsible: we don't really position ourselves as adults, and we keep waiting for [the authorities] to provide for us [...] And they don't give and they're not going to. (Erendida)

The teachers Erendida describes are infantilized within a Kantian "tutelage"³⁵ and no attempt is made to construct a new future; rather, they remain docile bodies. From their (self-imposed?) docile position, she implies, they exist in naïve ignorance of the forces aligned against them, and it is only when they take up action and dare to raise their voices (in a long drawn out and highly politicized strike) that these forces make themselves fully and violently known. The link between responsibility and power is obvious here. It is by taking responsibility for their own future that these same teachers enter fully into an overt field of power, finding there both the potential to imagine "another type of life" and the true dimension of the forces that would have them remain in their historical condition. The teachers' strike in Oaxaca, which lasted many months and was a temporary focal point for a broader social uprising against the state government, was what Foucault would have termed a 'revolt':

In the end, there is no explanation for the man [sic] who revolts. His action is necessarily a tearing that breaks the thread of history and its

³⁵ In his essay, *What is Enlightenment?*, published in 1784, Kant describes the its spirit in the following terms: Enlightenment is the emancipation of man from a state of self-imposed tutelage of incapacity to use his own intelligence without external guidance. Such a state of tutelage I call 'self-imposed' if it is due, not to lack of intelligence, but to lack of courage or determination to use one's own intelligence without the help of a leader. *Sapere audé!* Dare to use your own intelligence! This is the battle-cry of the Enlightenment.

long chains of reasons so that a man can genuinely give preference to the risk of death over the certitude of having to obey. (Foucault in Bernauer, 1994, p.64)

The strike in Oaxaca was crushed and lives were indeed lost. Nevertheless, Erendida's testimony remains a potent example of how power and conflict is invoked when we cease to simply obey and conform. It would seem that the saying "With great power comes great responsibility" can effectively be reversed. With responsibility, understood as the will to self-determination, comes power. However, as Besley and Peters (2007) point out, the neo-Foucauldian interpretation of the liberal project of modernity demonstrates how modern government has effectively attempted to divulge great responsibility to individuals whilst simultaneously circumscribing the accompanying power to self-determination. The truly modern subject has been invested with the responsibility to self-govern by the exercise of moral, economic, political and professional 'freedom of choice', but these are only to be enjoyed within narrow parameters policed by government. It is, they argue, the consummate sleight of hand of good government to divulge responsibility to the subject at the same time as circumscribing their freedom.

Teachers, charged with exercising their professional discipline at the interface between the state and its population, are at the epicentre of this phenomenon. Their 'permitted' access to power is precisely to be responsible for good government, both of themselves and of their students. Igor, Erendida and Dora have all, at some point in their career, demonstrated a concern to comply with their perception of the established parameters of being a good teacher. From within their limitations they feel responsible for the correct administration of the technologies of power and of self that constitute and traverse education and schools. Rebeca, also, feels "squashed" by the increased responsibility of moving from supply teaching to a permanent post where she has to make things happen and get results. This responsibility and the opportunity to consolidate her position and experience is both embraced and feared. The fear of adversity accompanies her sense of possibility. When she attempts to make things happen her way, by instigating an hour of silent reading in class, she confronts the "gaze" of the other actors in the school:

The head told me to write a letter to the parents explaining what I was doing [with the silent reading time]. A colleague said 'Don't even think about it! Because that is like setting a precedent and then, you'll see that we will have to give explanations for everything we do!' They should show a little trust in the fact that we are not crazy [laughter] and that we know how to do what we are doing, and that *you* are the teacher. (Rebeca)

Behind the concerned gaze of the head are the triangulating gazes of the parent and education authorities in the trap of visibility denounced by Foucault (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, pp.206-213) (watching them, watching you, watching them). So within this small drama, as Rebeca's colleague knows, the issue of domination and freedom are writ large. Rebeca's apparently innocuous proposal puts her suddenly at the heart of the school's permanent provocations of power and reveals the monolithic reality of schools' pyramid hierarchy. Rebeca's highly visible novelty upsets the flow of decision-making and created risk, raising the alarming question of who is to take responsibility for 'innovation'. On whose authority can this reading proposal be 'safely' undertaken? Though she successfully instigates the silent reading hour, Rebeca is made aware that self-determination, initiative and innovation are not the prime responsibility of the teacher; rather, it is to maintain a certain type of order based on a certain type of recognizable teaching. Whilst teachers may be tempted to feel that their relationship to the students is intimate, singular, it is in fact public property. They share responsibility for what happens in this relationship with the institution and community at large, and with the very reason of state: good government. Good government stretches responsibility across a terrain, and incites a culture of control. If a teacher has been beating students for years then, by the logic of good government, blame cannot rest on the teacher alone; rather it will spread within the institution and probably without. However, it is worth highlighting that in the case of Mexican schools, although individual teachers may be targeted for bad practice, it is unlikely the ripples will spread through and between different actors. A head teacher is unlikely to fear for their own job because they have not adequately monitored the activities of one of their staff members. As the narratives of Fernando, Igor, Erendida and Dora make clear, the administrative discourses and mechanisms of organization and accountability are effectively simulations of technologies of power. This does not appear to be so much the case in Spain where professional accountability is more conspicuously an

issue in the narratives. In this sense, at least in Spain, the teacher is not alone in the classroom, however alone they may feel, and their pedagogic decisions can only ever be taken in knowledge of the Foucauldian gaze.

For both Irene and Rebeca, being subjected to authority has far reaching implications for their own classroom authority. Just as they feel themselves to be conditioned and controlled by the structure to which they belong, they recognize a tendency to be inflexible in their demands on students. In psychological terms we might say they are identified with authority. Control, as it were, passes through them to their students. Irene is able to see within herself a tendency to authoritarianism: "I think", she says, "it has to do with my pride, it is that 'you have to do what I say, when I say it'". It may be that Irene's conflicts with unruly students are aggravated by pride, but we should not overlook the structural questions in personalized situations of daily conflict. Firstly, teachers are expected to set the agenda for students to follow. This arrangement is at the heart of schools as institutions. Secondly, Irene's teaching agenda is not set autonomously. It is an expression of cultural and institutional values in which she is paid to be a stakeholder. Perhaps, then, Irene is just 'being a teacher' when she locks horns with her students.

If Rebeca and Irene's narratives capture some problems of meeting the gaze of authority, narratives also touch on the questions around *occupying* the gaze of authority. Dora, for example, describes herself as naturally authoritarian and to all appearances would be suited to her position within the school supervision. However, her positioning had become complex and nuanced since she became aware of the double-bind inherent to her role:

I'm the one who's always demanding things! I'm the one who goes by the classrooms and 'you give me your lesson plans, you give me your daily work log'; and then I tell my boss 'I wrote such and such'; 'observe this', and 'let's see what you observed'; they make me the judge, [put me in a position to] govern, and like I said, I'm tired of that.
(Dora)

She is feared and respected by the teachers she supervises:

[R]espect in the sense of 'she's really tough'; or respect because 'she's going to say something', or because 'she likes things done right', or 'do it right because she's going to come and see it'. (Dora)

In assuming this role she also becomes obscured to herself and to others. She has become "too big to get close to" and earns respect, "but not a loving respect". Foucault pointed to the clash between the "recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom" (Foucault, 2000d, p.342) at the heart of the relations of power, but Dora's experience points to another "agonism" within power relations; the juxtaposition of role or function and of being a 'person'. This 'agon' is perhaps contained within Foucault's concept of "will" and "freedom", but it is worth bringing special attention to bear upon it as it would appear to be central to the individual's experience of power relations. Dora's official identity is taken on above and beyond the sense of herself as a person. She must become a vehicle or instrument for the technologies of power that define and justify the role. This brings to mind Rabinow's comment on Foucault's vision of how disposition or orientation is manufactured by good government: "The end of good government is the correct disposition of things – even when these things have to be invented so as to be well-governed" (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p.21). In stepping into the invented role she is herself invented as governed and governing.

In occupying this gaze of power there lurks also a possibility of 'permanent dissatisfaction'. Dora indicates as much in her pithy "like I said, I'm tired of that". Dora's experience conforms to Foucault's description of the power of the normalizing gaze as "one in which everyone is caught, those who exercise this power as well as those who are subjected to it" (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p.19). For Dora *dissatisfaction* with the role leads to a *dis-identification* with that role; she has begun to see the costs of confusing herself with the responsibilities assigned to her within games of power. Writing on the potential outcome of his architectural utopia of control, the Panopticon, Jeremy Bentham makes the following claim: "Call them soldiers, call them machines: so they were but *happy* ones, I should not care" (Bentham, quoted in Miller, 1994, p.221). Herein lies Bentham's *greatest* expectation, that of happiness. But Dora is not happy, she is tired of being made to be judge, and, of course, of being judged as judge, inaccessible to both herself and others as a 'person.' However, there are

differences between Dora's experience and Foucault's critique of the Bentham's Panopticon which stresses the anonymity of the guard in the watch tower. Dora is not blessed with anonymity. She is exposed and vulnerable to the gaze of the other. If anonymity can be said to exist, i.e. the faceless bureaucracy, it remains once removed. Dora's gaze of power is 'cursed' by being able to see itself reflected in the eyes of the teachers she supervises.

Dora and the teachers she supervises have been made responsible for maintaining a power game for which they are not responsible. Ideally, this game is to course through them but not be overly invested by them; *they* are to become *it*, but *it* is not to become *them*. Problems in these roles increase as interference increases, and Dora's autonomy or sovereignty is seriously challenged; she knows herself to be watched by those over whom she watches, and can imagine at least some of the judgements to which she is subjected. As she begins to hanker more for relationship, the formulaic interaction of the power games become increasingly sterile to her. Such interference is compounded by the fact that she herself knows the other position of the 'watched', having been herself a classroom teacher. The inter-changeability of roles within the power games, which traditionally has been a central feature of many government institutions, is a reality in the micro-physics of power that is perhaps overlooked by Foucault, and, once recognized, can be situated as an important ingredient within the layered dynamics of "permanent provocation".

Dora is far from being alone in finding difficulties in assuming positions of responsibility/authority within the structure. Muriel has avoided becoming a head teacher because she knows that the job will consume her in a futile workload. Not only this, she is aware that to take up the responsibility of leadership goes against her tendency and practice of "opposition".

If I set myself to doing the job [of head ...], that determination to do it well would be completely exhausting because I will work and work and work, and in the end I know that I wouldn't achieve anything, or at least now I know that not by those means, because it would all be my own work [...] instead of going forward with everyone together. [...] I have never known how to delegate to other people, and a head must know that. So, its as if I am very comfortable in opposition, good at seeing what is wrong [...] I'm very clear about where we *should not* be going,

but on the other hand I'm not sure about which direction we *should* be going. (Muriel)

Muriel is competent at identifying failings; she is a critical voice in the machine, but she does not feel that she knows what the alternative would be. Like Lorena, she knows what she does not want, but not what she does want. She is unable to take responsibility for an alternative vision of education. One of Muriel's problems with assuming more responsibility is that she feels she would not know how to divest herself of that responsibility through delegating work within a team and so become less burdened herself. It is a paradox of good leadership that one of its chief features should be the capacity to divest responsibility in other people. Power involves making other people accountable, and engaging with the myriad ways people seek to resist being held fully accountable. A good head of a school must delegate responsibilities in such a way that other people are happy taking on work, even when challenging or even impossible. This, indeed, is an art of government.

The elusiveness of the art of government is evidenced in the narratives. Muriel Rosa took up the challenge of headship and nearly drowned under a mound of work, spurred on by what she sees to be a neurotic omnipotence ("I can do it all"). Likewise, Fernando, a self-professed 'back-seat driver', left the comfortable shadows of 'leading from behind' to assume the clear and direct responsibility of headship. His attempts to make his colleagues dance to his energetic and exacting tune were resisted. With the benefit of hindsight he says that he would do things differently, accepting his colleagues more, "accepting how they are, their limits, and not trying to achieve my dreams through them". If Fernando were to take up a headship now, he would not be so goal oriented and would not seek to impose his 'great expectations'.

Great Expectations: revisited

Foucault would perhaps concur with Fernando's renunciation of the conceit of power, and with Anna Freud's psychoanalytically inspired conclusion that "We must not demand too much from one another" (Freud, quoted in Britzman, 1998, p.9). Foucault's aesthetical asceticism was directed principally at the self, not the other. It is oneself that is to be the object of greatest critical (though tolerant)

scrutiny in an ethics he named as 'the care of the self'. The truth-telling explored in the previous chapter, *The Arts of Getting By*, is a practice that falls within Foucault's conception of the care of the self, which is, ultimately, the struggle to become what one is not, to transcend the givens of a subjected self. By stepping away from dominant forms of subjectification, the individual is free to turn the critical gaze upon himself or herself. It is in this practice of freedom (through thinking differently) that Foucault locates our potential to create a space for ourselves within the inevitable relations of power. But unlike 'utopian' thinkers like Marx, Foucault is cautious about some aspects of this freed reason. For Foucault, critical thought must be balanced by a 'tolerance' of the limits of reality; an awareness of these limits becomes integral to the challenge of the "complex and difficult elaboration" of self as an object:

[T]his work done at the limits of ourselves must, on the one hand, open up a realm of historical inquiry and, on the other, put itself to the test of reality, of contemporary reality, both to grasp the points where change is possible and desirable, and to determine the precise form this change should take. (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p.46)

By way of illustration of the Foucauldian ethic of the care of the self, I would like at this point to return to the narrative of Cecilia, and to her journey of professional development previously explored in *Questions of Purpose*. Its end point, eminently Foucauldian, is the assertion of freedom of thought and action within the boundaries of our collective and individual historical condition. Cecilia gives the impression of having reached a situation of creative compromise or equilibrium between constraint and freedom. It is obvious that her tolerance of the legal limits of her situation is not 'docility'; rather, she has grasped where change is possible, and this accommodation has given her the freedom she currently feels. Whilst we can argue that Cecilia has 'sold out' on her youthful spirit of change, Foucault is adamant that he

prefer[s] even these partial transformations that have been made in the correlation of historical analysis and the practical attitude, to the programs for a new man that the worst political systems have repeated throughout the twentieth century. (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p. 47)

It is to this point that Cecilia comes back at the end of the interview when asked if she would like to add anything. The interview has helped her, she says, to fully understand this point of freedom within limits. It is worth quoting at length:

I realize that, yes, I have worked to understand what my objectives are when I'm going to give a class with my students, what it is that I want to achieve. This has helped me a great deal to feel calmer, not to be so lost, or going here and there. It helped me to know that these are my objectives, but that my own capacity is not infinite, that it is limited, and that I can only get to where I can get to, and there are things I can't resolve and stuff I can't cover, that I don't have the resources behind me because the problems are just too big for me, and I can't do anything, and there I am. And situating myself in all that, and also describing it now, I realize that this process I have been through allows me to go into the classroom with more tranquillity. Not believing myself to be the salvation, because that happens a lot to many teachers, and it happened to me as well, believing ourselves to be saviours of the world when we see that the family of a student is a disaster, that life is such and such, so we're going to do something. It's accepting that what there is sometimes is very complicated, and you can do some small thing, but you can't solve anybody's life for them. (Cecilia)

Cecilia's renunciation of her aspirations to a 'radical' struggle would seem far from defeatist; rather, it is a renunciation pregnant with a Foucauldian humility, of 'small expectations' and the attention to detail made possible by a philosophy of 'less is more'. Just as Cecilia has experienced herself as fallible, Foucault bursts the myth of our collective progress, the glorious march of history and modernity, the assertion of Reason's power over the unreasonable forces of the body. In so doing, he leaves us standing at the crossroads of a complex historico-practical experience of subjectivity and faced with our own seeming impotence. It is Foucault's mystical turn, his alchemy, to then invite us to construct our freedom upon this apparently inhospitable spot, this ground zero. And yet Cecilia's journey in the belly of the whale would seem to lend weight to the possibility of a technology of self, an ethos, which might save us from the worst torments of permanent provocations and deliver us into some kind of realised tranquillity. Most importantly, bearing in mind the later work of Foucault, Cecilia's truce with the system has allowed her to turn the spotlight on herself, and it is here that the SAT programme appears to have been of particular importance. She underlines two situations as particularly relevant to her current perception of that "complex and difficult elaboration" of self that is becoming her goal. Both of these situations bear a relation to questions

of power. In the first, she recounts how the SAT programme helped her to discern her own highly camouflaged competitive behaviour within the staff team. Through the sharing of anecdotes of behaviour at work Cecilia was able to admit to her overt and covert strategies for domination, constructed around her ideas, experience and capacity. If unchallenged, their competitive edge remained invisible. However, if her positioning came under threat or was questioned, then conflict would arise. Commenting on the importance of her experience in the SAT, she says:

In my professional relations it has been very useful for detecting situations of this type and helping me to situate myself. It's not that it never happens anymore, but now I position myself differently. Now it doesn't take me so much by surprise, and I don't get so angry with the other person. Before I used to think the other person was mad, 'that's so unfair, why are they boycotting everything I do, but why?' A great big thing was in play there that I didn't see, I didn't get it. (Cecilia)

Having 'got it', Cecilia is now able to diffuse these situations, or at the very least see her own complicity in the competitive games of power that go on between staff.

The second situation she highlights as needing work is her empathic potential with her students. Released from some of the tensions that surround the classroom, Cecilia is able to focus her attention on her relationship with the students. Here she is finding herself to be uncomfortably 'invested' by the dominant prejudice toward the rational and toward intelligence. In her actions and attitudes she feels she has been unable to transcend this bias. Asked what she feels she might have learned during the SAT that is reflected or has had an impact in her relations to the students, she answers as follows:

For me, above all, the acceptance of myself; not questioning myself, accepting my limits and also having my objectives clear. Being clear that I am doing something that I believe in and consider to be worthwhile. And also [the SAT] has helped to improve the quality of my emotional relationships with students. That for me is the most difficult thing. Because with two or three I can do it easily, but not with the group, and especially not with some of them. So that for me has been the longest haul of any, to keep on expanding that [capacity]. (Cecilia)

We see here Cecilia's dual position. She has achieved, she feels, an important degree of self-acceptance, which appears to express itself as a (Kantian) confidence in her own judgement. Yet at the same time we see that there is a struggle to move

beyond her limitations, and to expand her ability to connect and engage with students emotionally. We may detect a double empowerment or assertiveness: one that entails a practice of freedom within a restrictive system; and one that patiently asserts a 'higher' will over her limits. Once more, there are echoes to be found in Foucault:

I shall [...] characterize the philosophical *ethos* appropriate to the critical ontology of ourselves as a historico-practical test of the limits that we may go beyond, and thus as work carried out by ourselves upon ourselves as free beings. (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p.47)

Cecilia, true to this Foucauldian spirit, is 'carrying out work on herself', and this work feeds directly in to the power games experienced in the classroom. In so doing, the question is becoming whether or not she can dominate herself in order to acquire:

[...] the management techniques, and also the morality, the *ethos*, the practice of the self, that will allow [her] to play these games of power with as little domination as possible. (Foucault and Rabinow, 1997, p.298)

Moving on to the case of Igor, one might conclude that, post-SAT, an increased contact with the present has allowed him to re-think reward and punishment in his classroom. It is in this attention to the here and now that he has re-discovered the possibility of contact, transparency and honesty, as opposed to domination. He comes to the conclusion, for example, that students can be trusted to at least allocate a part of their grade. A small but important part of his matrix of power is thus re-negotiated with the students. Igor is no longer necessarily the person who can exclusively evaluate their progress and their capacity.

Even more importantly in terms of re-negotiating power, Igor has promoted student feedback within his teaching. Whilst this is not formal, and will not have wider implications beyond the classroom, it is nonetheless a significant move, especially considering his previous authoritarian style. Unlike the official practices of course evaluation, a written report at the end of a course, Igor throws open the doors to immediate and open feedback from the group. His own performance would appear now to be under permanent reconstruction as a result of taking into account feedback from his students. Likewise, his students are subjected to his

feedback. Igor's new practices blur the boundaries of power relations and the traditional directionality from teacher to student. At the very least he is stepping into unknown territory, for himself as well as for his students.

There is a parallel here to Foucault's advocacy of the breakdown of dualisms as a means of transcending our historical condition and thus "thinking differently". The most obvious example is from Foucault's personal life and involved the transitions between the dominant-submissive poles of sado-masochistic sex. By alternating between dominance and submission, and on the borders of pleasure and pain, one could transcend duality. We can see a similar transition occurring in Igor's classroom between judge and judged, teacher and learner. From what Igor says about his re-negotiation of power relationships, he appears to have been able to transcend historical limitations to establish a power dynamic which involves a considerable degree of porosity and flux. As Igor comments, transcending his previous identification with authoritarianism has involved:

taking away some of my authority, power, but that authority, that power had become a burden and a source of fatigue for me. So removing that authority, that power, has left me freer and I do a better job, that is, it has many more benefits for me. (Igor)

But according to Rose what we are seeing in the case of Igor might not be so much a taking away of authority or power; rather, in his assimilation of a new psychologically informed discourse and practice, we can see the evolution toward a new ethical leadership built around psychology and the operations of psychological expertise:

[I]t is not only that the truths of psychology have become connected to our practices of the self, with the notions that normality, autonomy, and personal success can be achieved through the engagement of the self in a psychological regime of therapeutic remodelling. It is also that a psychological ethics is intimately tied to the liberal aspirations of freedom, choice, and identity. Therapeutic ethics promises a system of values freed from the moral judgement of social authorities. Its norms answer not to an arbitrary moral or political code but only to the demands of our nature and our truths as human beings. And it seeks not to impose a new moral self upon us, but to free the self we truly are, to make it possible for each of us to make a project of our own lives, to fulfil ourselves through the choices we make, and to shape our existence according to an ethics of autonomy. (Rose, 1996, p.97)

Whilst Rose appears to be a little 'tongue-in-cheek' about psychological discourse, equating it to an extension of the rationale of liberalism, Igor seems to live his line of flight from the expectations of traditional authority not as the replacement of one discourse with another, but as a 'liberation'. Though we cannot definitively extrapolate such grand claims solely from the evidence of Igor's narrative as it stands, we can suggest that a qualitative shift has occurred with regard to his practice of authority. More than tweaking his book of classroom dos and don'ts, Igor's experience in the SAT programme would appear to have transported him to another dimension of power, to another type of authority. Igor actually uses the word "wisdom" to describe the attribute which permits him to operate within this new realm. This resonates with the following description of the trajectory of what Rose calls the "psychosciences":

In rendering the internality of the human being into thought, in rendering it simultaneously visible and practicable, the psychosciences have made it possible for us to dream that we can order our individual and collective existence according to a knowledge/technique that fuses truth and humanity, *wisdom* and practicality [...] it appears that we can govern others, and govern ourselves, according to principles that are adequate to and worthy of our nature as human selves. (ibid., p.99, my emphasis).

The 'wise' principle than Igor employs to usurp traditional authority would appear to be truth. We can see evidence that Igor has established, at least on a limited scale, a practice or field of *parrhesia*, or truth-telling. Whereas traditional power games will generally maintain a stratified access to truth, with a view to using truth as a faculty and operation of authority, in the tradition of *parrhesia* as practised by the Cynics, truth, beholden to no one and incontrovertible in its specificity, *is* power, *is* authority, and takes precedent over all cultural codes and political expediencies. Epictetus described the Cynic's compulsion to truth: The Cynic, he said, would not "wish to keep anything concealed that is his (otherwise he is lost, he has destroyed the Cynic within him, the man of outdoor life, the free man...)" (Epictetus in Miller, 1994, p.363). Truth becomes synonymous with freedom, and therefore synonymous with the struggle against power, oppression and subjection. Igor cannot be likened to Diogenes (the (in)famous, and possibly quintessential, Greek Cynic) because he is not openly or theatrically provocative, nor agitating for social revolution. However, he does *permit* provocation; he accepts being

'provoked' by the open critique of students, a provocation he has come to value more than his traditional authority. And surely there is something of Epictetus' spirit of the cynic in Igor's declaration to the students:

I say to them that I want to be able to look them in the eyes, that I have nothing to hide from them, that they can see me, they can go ahead and examine me, nothing will happen, or more likely things *will* happen – there is trust. (Igor)

We can find certain parallels in the experience of Dora. There is evidence that she, too, is imagining a new basis for the power games, and, once again, truth-telling would seem to be a key element of these re-negotiated relations of power. Though she has not as yet put her imaginings into practice, Dora has begun to think differently about her practice of power within the game of supervision she enacts with the teachers under her official gaze. Tired of the procedural machinations and bureaucratic simulations of 'truth', Dora imagines breaking through the systemic inertia and arriving at a genuine and frank human exchange:

I've even got the urge to arrive and sit down and not do anything, just see what [the teachers] tell me about how things have gone for them, what stuff they don't like. It's like I want to send them a letter and say: 'write a letter about the things you don't like about me, go ahead, just say it.' 'Write that letter, what you don't like about me; like, just do what you want, but just do it quietly so the bosses don't see us! Do what you want, today's a holiday!' (Dora)

As with Igor, for Dora truth-telling has replaced the established order of things. Dora is, however, still tentative about the prospect of going a little crazy at work, aware that she is not only stepping outside of herself, but also of procedural and cultural norms, thereby risking reprimand, ridicule, or marginalization. Even though at the moment of the interview her urges remain unrealized, it is still possible to infer that considerable shifts have occurred in her thinking. Perhaps we can detect in her proposed metamorphosis the goal that Foucault ascribed to the Cynics and the early Christian ascetics:

to transfigure totally who one was and what one thought, creating, if necessary through the most immoderate and punishing of practices, a radically other sort of existence, manifest in one's body, unmistakable in one's style of life – turning ones *bios*, as such, into 'the immediate, explosive, and savage presence of truth'. (Miller, 1994, p.361)

Juan's testimony presents us with the explosion of a savage truth when, during a role play in the SAT, he is forced, literally, to face the fact of being a clown, a fool, a joker. The 'show' rings horribly true to his life in the 'real' world, and the abyss of a life of hyperactive, sloppy, irreverent, repetitive superficiality opened up before him ("Now I see myself as ridiculous in all those things I used to do."). Juan's was a painful and debilitating awakening from his "automatic" living, but at the same time he was grateful to learn there were things he needed to understand regarding the repeated patterns of behaviour in his life. Above all, he came face to face with the possibility of being without merit. He was, he concludes:

Something that serves to make you laugh and doesn't have any value. That was my error, that I had no value, and that I felt that I could do it all! That there was nobody better than me. So, that was it. To realize all that I was doing from that clowning, and all that it had generated for me [...] I'm in a place where I need to be serious, and I am clowning around. That was it, that part there is what hurt me [...] so much arrogance, so much arrogance. (Juan)

This realization of his own smallness, combined with the sensation of having been taught important things by somebody who knows more than him, has had a powerful effect on Juan, making him more serious about his own life as something requiring cultivation. If Juan's realizations will have arrived over the course of the SAT programme, his educational epiphany arrived during an experience in the third of the retreats, an exercise which is used to 're-enact' the experience of being born:

When we began to die and to be reborn [...] (silence [...]) quiet sobbing [...] at that point I died (continuing in a clipped voice) [...] I died to what I was, and somebody was born that I needed to be born. It was like rebirth, but rebirth in all its positive aspects. [...] When I began to feel myself to be more cured, and to realize that everything that I had lived in my life is what made me who I am, so right there I said 'wow', if only all teachers could have this cure that you experience in the SAT, [...] If we all had that rebirth we could consider people in a different way, not only the students, but everyone, everyone! (Juan)

Juan's tale seems to fit into the Hegelian dialectic of "truth arising from misrecognition" (Žižek, 2008, p.66). Having misrecognized himself as worthy in his 'previous' life, he lived in an *expectation of greatness* (the Fool who mistook himself for King), a fantasy that gave him license to do as he pleased, including to fabricate

truth in elaborate lies. It is the recognition of this mis-recognition that permits Juan to begin to elaborate *great expectations* for himself, expectations that require no less than a re-birth. Like birth itself, re-birth is a violation of our known universe, a (self-induced) expulsion into a new world. If Juan is perhaps 'guilty' of a second degree of mis-recognition when describing himself as 'cured', we can appreciate the courage involved in recognising his original mis-recognition. It is this courage, perhaps desperate, that gives him greatness. He describes the sensation of having received a mythical sword – a sword of light, a sword of truth – and it is in relation to this pure object-idea, and the great responsibility that comes with it, that Juan acquires a new, though still tentative stature. He was not, after all, (originally) born great, but was achieving greatness in the recognition of this fact. The potential of this "truth arising from mis-recognition" (op.cit.) is elegantly illustrated by Žižek using the story of Elizabeth and Darcy's troubled love 'affair' in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*:

Let us take as a comical hypothesis that the first encounter of the future lovers was a success – that Elizabeth had accepted Darcy's first proposal. What would happen? Instead of being bound together in true love they would become a vulgar everyday couple, a liaison of an arrogant, rich man and a pretentious, empty-minded young girl. If we want to spare ourselves the painful route through the misrecognition, we miss the Truth itself: only the 'working-through' of the mis-recognition allows us to accede to the true nature of the other and at the same time to overcome our own deficiency – for Darcy, to free himself from his false pride; for Elizabeth, to get rid of her prejudices. (ibid. p.67)

Returning to Juan, his invitation to "consider people in a different way" takes on a greater significance. In his 'first' life he had been constitutionally incapable of seeing the worth in the other, but, as in *Pride and Prejudice* "the deficiency of the other is simply an objectification of the distortion of our own point of view" (ibid.). It is in the recognition of himself as 'ridiculous' that he can consider the other as potentially worthy, and it is in this recognition that he acquires his own moral stature. By shifting his expectations of 'greatness' from himself to the other, he achieves 'greatness'. Underlying this re-recognition of the multiplicity of experience is perhaps the greatest expectation of all and the hardest lesson of our troubled identities - that "the only way out is through" (op.cit.); only through the full experience of our madness, lack and disunity can we become sane, whole and

unified. Herein lies Juan's sense of his own courage, it is the courage of faith, belief in the giving up of belief, a commitment to his own 'ugliness' and imperfection that allows him to see, finally, nobility in others, and a (reflected?) nobility in himself.

Chapter 15: Questions of Performance - Discussion and Conclusions

If the teacher, considered as a Deleuzean subject, is a “qualitative multiplicity”, a complex folding of inner and outer, then this implies that they experience “the blurring of boundaries between epistemology, ethics, and psychology” (Semetsky, 2006, p.20). Having accepted that such boundaries are inevitably blurred, the grounds for the negotiation of a subjectivity around identities such as ‘good teacher’ becomes unstable. Perhaps for this reason the narratives reveal the teachers in this research struggling hard to know what precisely they lacked or overdid in their efforts to become (good) teachers. Cecilia has learnt that there are no hard and fast rules on which to depend when trying to decide how to be good. Her critical eye has naturally alighted on the “terrible teachers”, and she has seen for herself that terrible teachers come in all shapes and sizes: “I saw that there were different types of teachers with different styles, all the different ways to be in the class, and there were terrible teachers for every style”. Teachers, according to Cecilia, are creative in finding ways to fail. Just as the terrible teacher takes a multiplicity of forms, Cecilia testifies to a quality in good teaching that has little to do with forms or ideas, which can vary, but rather with “something that happened in a more natural and spontaneous way in each *group*” (my italics). What is this “something”? Though she did not put this label on it at the time, she tentatively agrees with my interpretation of this description of the diversity of successful teaching in which I identified the differential “natural and spontaneous” qualities as akin to “authenticity”. Cecilia’s observations from experience mirror Palmer’s *The Courage to Teach* (1998) which argues that no generalizations can be made about style: style should not colonize a teacher, rather a good teacher can (pragmatically) occupy/use styles, but first and foremost their work is to occupy the teacher role in a way that reflects who they are.

Even if Palmer’s stance falls outside much of the techno-rational discourses of modernity, it also appears commonsensical. However, Parker’s invitation to

'authenticity' is not without its problems. As these narratives show, who a teacher is may not necessarily be all that pretty, nor a firm basis upon which to build a practice. But most perplexing among the problems with authenticity is perhaps the question of what exactly it means to be oneself, to be 'authentic'? Surely 'oneself' is as much the problem as the solution? Surely, failing teachers are also being *themselves*? Surely post-Foucault or post-Deleuze, it is difficult to talk in any commonplace way about authenticity? Semetsky (2006, pp.19-20), for example, comments on Deleuze,

The notion of being a fold points toward a subjectivity understood as a process irreducible to universal notions such as totality, unity, or any a priori fixed self-identity. As a mode of intensity, subjectivity is capable of expressing itself in its present actuality neither by means of a progressive climbing toward the ultimate truth or the higher moral ideal, nor by "looking for origins, even lost or deleted ones, but setting out to catch things where they were at work, in the middle: breaking things open, breaking words open" (Deleuze, 1995, p.86) (Semetsky, 2006, pp.19-20).

In contrast to Deleuze's actualized/actualizing subjectivity, Moore (1994, p.143) identifies a "unified, ideal, Cartesian" notion of self implicit in the dominant discourses of teacher identity (competent craftsperson, charismatic subject and – to a lesser extent – reflective practitioner). Such discourses, he claims, run counter to the "material, constructed self: that is, the self as a 'text' which is formed at the intersections of various discursive practices and which can be 'read' both by others and 'by the self itself'". Favouring the reflexive turn as a means of experiencing and conceiving the self, Moore sees in this turn a greater fidelity to the multiplicities within identity and the "need for flexible responses to meet the demands of the specific and perhaps changing situation (the contingent) as well as taking full and constructive account of our own individuality (idiosyncratic)" (p.142). The reflexivity proffered by Moore also places:

an emphasis on accommodation rather than assimilation (opening ourselves to the possibility of modifying our own understandings and behaviours rather than limiting our understandings and behaviours to what we have pre-decided), or seeking to force situations and other people into conforming to our unquestioned world view. (p.143)

He suggests that teachers benefit from distancing themselves from dominant discourses because these:

have a nasty habit, if we let them, of getting in the way of teacher development, excluding much that is important for our consideration [...] heaping far too much responsibility for educational consequences on the individual teacher or pupil [so that] we need to be particularly careful to avoid being seduced by models of good teaching. (p.10)

It would probably come as no surprise to Moore that Irene's old teachers, to whom she goes in search of advice on how to be a good teacher, explain to her that only her own direct experience will provide her with answers. It seems that Irene's *experienced* teachers are reluctant to proffer any recipes for good teaching. This is almost mythological in its evasiveness and might appear as a solipsistic, unprofessional attitude. Or does it recognize important truths about education, subjectivity, community and experience? Certainly, it echoes a Deleuzian spirit: what is authentic cannot be general, rather it is singular, here and now:

thus making individuation a matter of contingency depending on the broad range of varied situations and the collective assemblages embodying each experience. (Semetsky, 2006, p.21)

That Irene is forced back on the hard rock of experience by her one-time teachers concurs not only with Moore's positioning of reflexivity and Deleuze's multiplicities in the middle of experience, but also, according to Semetsky, with Dewey's pragmatism. As "transcendental empiricists" both Deleuze and Dewey "positioned the philosophical point of departure in the ordinary experiential situation" (ibid., p.25). As Boisvert (1998, p.15) underlines in relation to the (possibly) transcendental journey, "lived experience, that is where it must begin". Are Irene's old teachers Deweyan in spirit? Would they agree that "Only by progressive organization of 'inner' and 'outer' material in organic connection with each other can anything be produced that is not a learned document or an illustration of something familiar" (Dewey, 1934/1980, p.75)? These progressive, organic connections must surely result from an expansive maturation through experience:

What [a person] gets and gives as a human being, a being with desires, emotions and ideas, is not external possessions, but a widening and deepening of conscious life – a more intense, disciplined and expanded realization of meanings [...] And education is not a mere means to such a life. Education is such a life. (Dewey, 1916/1924, p.417)

As Dewey indicates, a widened, deepened, more intense, disciplined and expanded realization of conscious meanings is both a means and an ends – a mode of subjection *and* a *telos*. But this *telos* does not end here. This ‘state’ of elaborated awareness is what enables another state, one in which “a system of affects replaces the strict and rigid moral code” (in relation to teaching and schooling one might imagine a sensibility to relationship, a devotion to contact with multiplicities replacing the fixities of curriculums, ideologies, roles and individual styles). The replacement of codes (morals, curriculum, etc.) with modes of experience requires new forms of certainty and uncertainty, new forms of responsibility and irresponsibility. It can occur only where power has been shifted from the static situations of law and normativity towards the flux of experience, of folding and unfolding, and the dynamic multiplicities of inside and outside, and of their lines of communication. In short, the ‘subject-less subject’ must be decentred and so ‘empowered’ through an expansion across the psychic and social territory of subjectivity:

[T]here are things one cannot do, believe, feel, unless one is weak, enslaved, impotent; and other things one cannot do, feel and so on, unless one is free or strong. A method of explaining by immanent modes of existence thus replaces the recourse to transcendent values. The question in each case: does, say, this feeling increase our power of action or not? Does it help us come on full possession of that power? (Deleuze, 1992, p.269)

Does a teacher’s performance of the performance of teaching “increase [their] power of action”? The narratives of this research confirm schools to be highly complex environments, their purposes and orders being multiple, and often contradictory. ‘Finding’ a teacher identity that works, that ‘performs’, and is in ‘full possession’ of its own power, its own self, is an interpretative practice rooted *in an art* of self-acceptance and naturalness, on discovering and creating a voice, a centre of gravity, that provides an ‘art of getting by’. This is especially true in times of educational reform in which a “complex of overlapping, agonistic and antagonistic discourses” invariably “swarm and seethe around the teacher” (Ball, 1999, p.14). Teachers must learn to construct, negotiate and chart a professional identity within what Britzman has called education’s “cacophony of calls” (1991, p.223). The challenge is perhaps at its most acute for student teachers who have to

adapt themselves from an identification with the position of learner to the position of teacher, which has previously only been experienced as 'other' (Moore, 2004). Evidence from the three studies of teacher identity that inform Moore's reflections and conclusions in *The Good Teacher* lead him to concur with Coldron and Smith's hypothesis that teacher identities are "partly given and partly achieved" through "active location in social space" (Coldron and Smith, 1999, p.711). For the student teachers in Moore's studies:

the balancing act between one's own preferred method of doing things and the preferred – often imposed and often antagonistic – methods and preferences of others appeared to be at the heart of the practitioner's self-worth, self-belief, professional satisfaction and consequent effectiveness in the classroom. (Moore, 2004, p.19)

As Moore makes clear, such accommodations and their conflicts are not exclusive to the experience of student teachers, but represent a permanent backdrop to the professional life of the teacher. Regarding the negotiation of this contested territory, Moore's conclusion is that the psychological concepts of repression and transference – described by Freud as "new editions of old conflicts" (Freud, 1968, p.454) – can offer considerable help "to (student) teachers and the teachers of (student) teachers in making constructive, ultimately productive sense of classroom events, particularly during times of stress" (Moore, 2004, p.19). Moore affirms the classroom (and presumably the whole school) as a "*site* for the playing out of 'new editions of old conflicts'", in which "emotional experience and response can impact negatively as well as positively on pedagogy and classroom management" (ibid.). This 'a-professional' perspective on teaching identity is supported by Britzman and Pitt, who argue that "teachers' encounters with students may return them involuntarily and still unconsciously to scenes from their individual biographies" (1996, pp.117-118; see also Felman, 1987; Gallop 1995; Penley, 1989).

Lastly, it is worth commenting on the possible wider relevance of the new performances that are taking shape in teachers post-SAT. It is tempting to view these transformations as singular curiosities, as heart-warming tales of spiritual and psychological conversion in cynical times. However, Žižek, like Foucault before him, re-vindicates such 'oddities' as politically relevant, and speaks to the

possibility of a move *toward* the collective corruption of the State, as opposed to a necessary withdrawal. We can, he argues, escape the State whilst being in it, we can get beyond its parameters by going through, into them, just as the subject escapes themselves by *going through* that same self:

[T]here is no way – but also no need – to fully abstract ourselves from the “corrupted” order of the State: what we have to do is introduce a supplementary torsion into it, to inscribe into it our fidelity to an Event. In this way, we remain within the State, but we make the State function in a non-statal way (in a similar way to how poetry, say, takes place within language, but twists and turns it against itself, thus making it tell the truth)” (Žižek, 2011, p.201).

How might the extra-statal performances of teachers post-SAT best be described? What is the torsion that the teaching and learning of the SAT programme appears to help teachers to introduce into the discursive mix of their specific environments? One perspective for understanding the shifts occurring within the teachers’ narratives is the notion of the *generative identity* as explored by Mark Bracher (2006). Bracher, drawing on a Lacanian psychoanalytic ethics, concludes that the psychotherapeutic focus on a subject’s desire is not narcissistic *per se*; “it is rather the case that if we pursue our own desire as far as possible, it will lead us not to a self-involvement but to a[n Emmanuel] Lévinasian care for the other that is prior to being – a care for the other that we must enact in order to become subjects in the first place”³⁶. Bracher makes the link to Erik Erikson’s concept of “generativity”, understood as the “the instinctual power behind various forms of ‘selfless caring’” (Erikson, 1964, p.131). This generative impulse is manifest in our need to teach and help others thrive, develop and flourish, needs that are central to adult identity, marking the “the fulfilment of ... identity” (Ibid., p.130). Though the end result of Bracher’s recurrence to the notion of a generative identity for teachers is perhaps similar to the conventional understanding of professional ethics, with its ‘normative’ focus on the care of the other, the crucial difference is in the admission of the self-gaze (or navel gazing) as a legitimate and perhaps necessary route for nurturing the generative impulse toward the other. An awareness of our own basic, ontological need for identity recognition (i.e. the need

³⁶ There are clear echoes here of a Foucauldian ethics of the care of the self as preparatory for assuming a formal role within relations of power.

to be recognized, in the first instance by our parents) and of the pain and anger at the negation of this identity and experience of ourselves is what permits the subject to take on an “interindividual” identity structure (Kegan, 1982), “in which our common humanity overrides our differences with all others” (Bracher, 2006, p.154). Or, in other words;

[A]s we recover and metabolise the primal mutuality that is the origin and core of our identity, both the content and the structure of our identity are altered in ways that involve our coming to embrace the other as [...] an essential dimension of our identity, such that the maintenance of our own identity requires that we nurture the other. (ibid. p.153)

The idea of an “interindividual” generative identity for teachers, arrived at in part through the practice of technologies of the care of self (psychotherapeutic and spiritual), becomes radical at the point at which the acts and events of connection that confirm such an identity run counter to the individualizing and totalizing technologies that are, according to Foucault, the hallmark of modern power. If modern power calculates and separates the individual (for example, using the ubiquitous technologies of examination), the *interindividual* identity, constructed and lived around mutuality, turns its attention toward the myriad performances of communication and involves to some extent a change in direction or tone within dialogue; no longer is the teacher so concerned with their ability to ‘penetrate’ the student with their own performance, rather they are more concerned with their permeability to the performances of the students, their susceptibility to the students’ otherness. We see clear examples of this in the narratives of Carla and Cecilia. Both have, in the Lacanian sense, followed their desire to the point of awakening an enhanced care for the other. It is from the performance of this awakened susceptibility that they are seeking to exert a “supplementary torsion” (op.cit.) in the formalisms of teaching identity and practice.

Section 5:

Situating the Research in the Field of Teacher Identity

Given the thesis' stated objective of *assessing the value* of the SAT programme as a professional development for teachers, it is important to make some kind of general conclusion as to the degree to which the transformations within the data are solving the problems encountered by teachers in their professional life. Furthermore, this final discussion with its conclusions will explore how the SAT programme can be contextualized within the field of reflexivity and teacher identity and thus try to situate the research's 'findings' within contemporary problematizations of power-knowledge-subjectivity. Does the narrative evidence confirm that the SAT programme represents the possibility of conceiving a psycho-spiritually inspired reflexivity that can make a meaningful contribution to the politics of teacher identity and the way teachers participate in power-knowledge relations?

Crises and exploding identities

Within an institutional climate focused on the ends of education (e.g. exam results), it is relatively easy to overlook the frayed edges of the *means*, the possible cost to teacher, student, parents, and society of such an education. This research, however, returns us to the question of means, to what each subject (teacher) feels they have to do in order to meet, confront or negotiate the *ends* - post-SAT, these teachers are re-situating themselves within a system that defends itself from the chaos of the unconscious and of group relations through a deliberate (or obstinate) belief in its systems and theories. As Britzman argues:

[T]he tension is that the institutional ethos of systematicity, or the belief that a system of operation can be transparent unto itself, forecloses any thought of the unconscious and, hence, the work of interpretation itself. Alan Blass (1998, p.426) locates the disclaimed tension: "Wherever one finds systematicity, one can, from a psychoanalytic point of view, ask the question of what unbearable piece of reality is being defended against by means of the system". (Britzman, 2003, p.99)

If the dominant discourses of education present us with a virtuous rationale transecting the life of schools, an implacable necessity behind the way things are done, this research presents us with evidence of the messy contrast of the *lived experience* of schooling. Whilst containing the sublime or Imaginary (Jaramillo, 2010) of education as an omni-present possibility, this lived experience is conspicuous for the omni-presence of intra- and inter-personal conflict and confusion.

Whilst the narratives commonly reveal not acute crisis but chronic provocations of low intensity, the teachers' experience of the SAT programme often inserted itself into ongoing stand-offs with catalytic effect. Frequently this increased the discomfort and sense of crisis prior to the release of tension through some significant shift in practice or movement in teacher identity. What we might conclude is that teacher identities are often sustained as much by what these teachers *don't know* as by what they know. That is to say, their teacher identity is as much negative as positive, as much a product of what they '*successfully*' ignore as

what they have successfully learnt. Identity is rendered unstable and vulnerable once we see it as vitally dependent upon a resistance to new-knowledge (see Bion, 1961), a construct that keeps things out as much as it holds things in relation. Juan's crisis of identity, for example, which included depressions and hostilities, resulted from the admission of the easily available 'knowledge' that he could not be taken seriously. Across the narratives the new, SAT-derived, self-knowledge that is catalysing change is frequently none other than the elephant in the room, what was obvious to all but previously overlooked or denied.

The persistent insistence of new-knowledge makes the fixing of identity a difficult task. It takes effort to remain the same, an *activity* of defence rather than a straightforward passivity. Britzman's work on teacher identity, like Moore's mobile discursive "positionings", highlights the process of *becoming* that underlines the projection of an identity through time, or the *project* of identity. Britzman argues that "Learning to teach – like teaching itself – is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become" (1991, p.8). The specific reference to teacher identity can also be framed within the increasing emphasis on identity in education generally, as pointed to by Wenger:

Education in its deepest sense and at whatever age it takes place, concerns the *opening up* of identities – exploring new ways of being that lie beyond the current state . . . Education is not merely formative – it is transformative . . . issues of education should be addressed first and foremost in terms of identities and modes of belonging and only secondarily in terms of skills and information". (1998, p.263, my emphasis)

The notion of *opened up*, or even exploded, identities has been highlighted because, as Foucault, Anna Freud (1931) and many others leave clear, formal education is not *per se* expansive; rather, in its productive capacity it is as limiting and delimiting of the human territory as it is expansive. If negotiation of the conflicts of teacher identity is possible, there can be no doubt that the starting point for teachers is a highly prescribed or 'squeezed' space in which multiple demands from multiple sources are focused on the teacher's subjectivity. As Britzman notes:

Unless the narrations of practice are read through theories of discourse – that is, as representing particular ideological interests, orientations, communities and meanings, and as deploying relations of power – there remains the danger of viewing the teacher's practical knowledge as unencumbered by authoritative discourse and as unmediated by the relations of power and authority that work through every teaching and research practice. (1994, p.72)

Once this is acknowledged it is easy to see how 'authentic' identity, 'real' becoming (or becoming 'real'), involves making overt those personal and professional discourses which have and would mediate the 'good', 'moderate' and 'bad' teacher, thereby developing a critical distance from those same mediations. MacLure (1993) claims that identity is a matter of "arguing for yourself", a hard-won effect of active engagement in the provocations around power-knowledge-subjectivity. As such, for teacher identity to acquire its own substance teachers must first have acquired (or be blessed with) a critical faculty that will allow them to see not only their positioning within structural games of truth and power, but also their own subjective agency within those same games. To expand on Foucault's metaphor of the gaze, the social and institutional gaze must be deciphered, but this can only be achieved once we have deciphered our own gaze, that invested vantage point from which we view our operations upon the world and its operations on us. Foucault's challenge, as such, is not only to resist the argument of the Other, it is also to resist the arguments of Self, or, in a reverse of MacLure's injunction, to 'argue against oneself'. Paradoxically, to *become* a teacher it is perhaps necessary to resist *being* a teacher: to resist Power one must resist one's own powers, and, likewise, to fully assume the authority of a teacher it is perhaps necessary to have fully assumed personal and professional vulnerability and fallibility.

If critical identity work, including the discourses of becoming, can have positivist undertones of a cumulative process of construction, perhaps it is necessary to make more space for this turn *against* oneself – for collapse, crisis, exhaustion, rupture, dead ends, futility, redundancy and despair as vital experiences necessary for opening up identities. Such deconstruction responds more fully to Foucault's genealogy as a method of interpreting who we are in the present, and to psychotherapy's anthropology of the desiring and dreaming subject. Britzman

draws our attention to this dreamt subject as juxtaposed to the educated subject of modernity:

The field's dominant tendency is to choose the empirical child over the dream, the child the adult can know and control. But in so doing, education has reduced the child to a trope of developmental stages, cognitive needs, multiple intelligence, and behavioural objectives. And these wishes defend against a primary anxiety of adults: what if the dream of learning is other to the structures of education? And yet if we return to the question of the dream as a strange model for education, if educators are to choose the child who dreams, what Pontalis (1981, p.95) would call, as he thought about the work of Melanie Klein, "the question child," then education might come to reside in that very inter-subjective place between the borders of knowledge and phantasy and, as Klein did, test its own knowledge against that of the child and so affect the adult. (2003, p.54)

We do not have to take a large imaginative leap to conjure education's '*question teacher*'. Indeed, a radical reflexivity, in evoking a teacher's desire, takes us a giant step closer toward the world of dreams and of children. It is, perhaps, precisely here, at the junction between the possibility of the '*question teacher*', alive to their own creative/destructive desire and fantasy, and the '*becoming teacher*', capable of making a deliberate move against themselves, that the identity work issuing from the teachers' participation in the SAT would seem to be taking place. In this sense, the *radical* reflexivity encouraged by the SAT programme takes aim at the solidity of the self-construct.

'Becoming good': growth, enlightenment, healing (and power)?

If a process of becoming referred to by Britzman and Moore (op.cit.) is unavoidable, the question is how can we ensure (individually and culturally) that the direction of travel in identity work is ultimately beneficial. This is especially true in an environment such as teaching, where 'becoming' frequently manifests itself as 'becoming burnt-out' or 'becoming cynical'. Psycho-spiritual practices exist with the intention of ensuring, within the inevitable accumulation of experience, a direction of travel that is deemed positive or fruitful. Naranjo's conclusion regarding the common themes of psycho-spiritual practices is that their central concern is implicitly or explicitly one of "developing consciousness",

including “the simple awareness and attention to the immediacy of experience” (1974, pp. 224-225). The developing of consciousness can be likened to Wenger’s “opening up of identities” (1998, p.263) and points toward an end-state or *telos*

as one that is characterized by *the experience* of openness to the reality of every moment, freedom from mechanical ties to the past, and surrender to the law’s of man’s [sic] being, one of living in the body and yet in control of the body, in the world and yet in control of circumstances by means of the power of both awareness and independence. (Naranjo, 1974, pp.228-229)

This desired or cultivated end-state implies “self-acceptance” of a “self-reality” that is in flux. Above all it is an “*experience of experiencing*”:

For this is what consciousness means, what openness means, what surrendering leads into, what remains after the veils of conditioned perception are raised, and what the aim of acceptance is. And since experiencing is a personal matter it cannot be properly described, defined, or conveyed in words. It is a secret of secrets that remains unexplained, however much it may be talked about. (ibid., p. 229)

In Naranjo’s conclusion we are not far from Foucault’s call for an “intensification of subjectivity” (op.cit) resulting from a cultivation of self. Indeed, Naranjo states that

the complete human being may be described as *more* himself, *more* in contact with reality, *more* able to both participate and maintain detachment, *more* free and yet *more* able to surrender, *more* accepting of his nature and limitations, and *more* conscious. (1974, p.127, my emphasis)

Whilst Naranjo underlines an enigmatic core to the flourishing of subjectivity, he also provides some pointers as to what it is that the ‘intensified subject’ can be expected to take up and/or leave behind. Given that the SAT is Naranjo’s attempt to construct a vehicle for the teaching of this mode of being, we can assume that it is, broadly speaking, movements deriving from intensification that we should be noting within the narratives.

It is clear from the evidence that the SAT ‘provokes’ a movement ‘*en masse*’ in certain directions, but that within this shift significant variants are occurring, variants that reflect the enneagram of personality’s differentiated view of the problem of subjectivity, the different challenges faced by our ‘immature’ egos. Carla, for example, has become more indulgent and playful, whilst Juan has become

more serious. But what can be said, in most general terms about the collective movements that are apparent in the narratives?

The general direction of travel can, for example, be interpreted from a Kleinian perspective as a shift *toward* an awareness and tolerance of an ambivalence characteristic of what Klein termed the “depressive” position and *away from* the idealizations, rejections and manipulations required to sustain the “paranoid-schizoid” position³⁷ (Klein, 1946; Segal, 1988). The ambivalence of the depressive state denies the subject the false privilege of standing apart from the unpleasantness of the world and incites a responsive movement toward “reparation”, toward what in the language of the enneagram of personality is identified as the “virtues” that stand in the shadows of our defensive “passions”. If the paranoid-schizoid or “passionate” position marks a defensive wall against experience, what stands out across the narratives is that these teachers, post-SAT, experience an increasing hunger for the ambivalences of ‘contact’, communication and relationship as an antidote/resistance to the threat/experience of alienation. This existential ‘hunger’ radiates as a manifestation of increasing consciousness in three directions – toward self-knowledge and contact, toward an ‘authentic’ exchange with the other, and toward a situatedness within the Other (the bigger picture).

Post-SAT teachers appear to have re-calibrated their positions along a variety of axes, and thus have come to re-situate themselves within the map of the territory of schooling. Taking a closer, yet still panoramic view of the data, the following axes stand out as the most important, and in nearly all cases the movement made is a shift toward to the first of the two poles:

³⁷ “Klein posited that a healthy development implies that the infant has to split its external world, its objects and itself into two categories: *good* (i.e., gratifying, loved, loving) and *bad* (i.e. frustrating, hated, persecutory). This splitting [undertaken in the paranoid-schizoid position] makes it possible to introject and identify with the good. In other words: splitting in this stage is useful because it protects the good from being destroyed by the bad. Later, when the ego has developed sufficiently, the bad can be integrated, and ambivalence and conflict can be tolerated [within what she termed the depressive position]” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paranoid-schizoid_position).

Relationship vs. knowledge
Multiplicity vs. simplicity
Flexibility vs. rigidity
Connectivity vs. compartmentalization
Responsibility vs. representativity/impotence
Authority vs. domination
Risk vs. caution
Fallibility vs. correctness
Care/involvement vs. objectivity
Local vs. universal

The combined effect of what might be relatively small shifts along any particular axes generated, without exception, a significant change in the way these teachers negotiate their agency within the school. If one axis could be identified as catalytic and synthetic of the other axes, it would perhaps be the axis *authority-domination*. What teachers are exploring might be summed up as a new type of authority - new both in its derivations and in its manifestations. Whilst pre-SAT 'authority' was more likely to have derived from the teacher as a representative of power-knowledge (a living, agentive nexus of structure or of ideology), post-SAT 'authority' aligned itself to a 'morality' derived from the ability to negotiate the unfolding present of self and other by reference to the singularities and multiplicities of that present, rather than by recourse to the smooth surfaces of identity, curriculum and dogma. In Foucauldian terms we might say that it is an authority made possible by the teachers' access to a new order of truth, an alternative valuation of 'reality'.

This authority, "interindividual" and "generative" (Brucher, 2006), appeals to connection, awareness, and transparency as opposed to the authority of representation, i.e. of being *representative* of power-knowledge in the classroom, or, conversely, representative of the forces of resistance (e.g. Cecilia, Yvete and Araceli). This representative authority blurs easily into the experience of being dominated and/or dominating through the demands of curriculum, official discourse, or ideologies. Often a teacher's problem, pre-SAT, was a capitulation to a universe of expectations and judgements. By re-calibrating their focus of attention many of these teachers have been able to supplant relations of power that are skewed toward domination with relations of power that derive from the authority of being more 'real', in as much as what is being proposed for teaching and

learning is more responsive to the idiosyncrasies of their here and now. Igor is clear, for example, that he has traded the manipulations of control and being controlled (by curriculum), for an authority that approximates to an Aristotelian “practical wisdom” or “*phronesis*” (Aristotle, 1934).

The true importance of this new authority, however, lies not in its origins; rather, in the degree of ‘autonomy’ it permits the teacher who is opening up their identity to the risks of personal (creative) responsibility as opposed to the risks of representativity. Across the narratives, teachers, post-SAT, exercise their authority by either contemplating or taking up practices that are not externally defined, but are seen by them to respond to immediate conditions, including their interpretation of their own desire and capacities. These practices usually involve a positive component and a negative component. The positive component is what is proposed as congruent to the situation, and the negative component involves the relegation of external demands to a second order of importance. Both of these components can occur only in as much as the teacher has assumed the authority of a connection with ‘reality’ that takes precedence (at least at times) over the call to embody official discourse.

The situatedness of this new authority has one very important feature: it is not absolutist. As the moment of the here-and-now is in continual flux there can be no absolute ideal in terms of concrete behaviour, meaning that few rules can be established. Consequently, the discourses of “perfection” that would fix good teaching around a certain set of initiatives and responses loses traction in the teachers’ evaluation of their worth. What can subsequently take the place of an idealized image of teaching is the experience of being a “good-enough” teacher, (very much after Winnicott’s notion of the “good-enough” mother). However, in the case of these teachers, this good-enough teaching, generally speaking, is arbitrated by the minimal but stringent demand of awareness, and the corresponding ability to formulate a response that arises from a connectedness with the emergent/immanent, even if this response may in itself not be ‘perfect’. If these teachers are renouncing static notions of the perfection of their practice, they are, perhaps, embarking on a yet more difficult, though more vital road whose

end is “to become worthy of the event” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.160). As Semetsky says of this becoming worthy:

A concept inhabits the empirical happening; it is, as Deleuze and Guattari say, a living concept, but the ethical work consists in the will itself being transformed into affirmation so as “to set up, ... to extract” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.160) an event in this living concept. (Semetsky, 2006, p.110)

These teachers are increasingly finding their challenge in discovering the singular manifestation of life within their classroom, a manifestation which includes the structures of curriculum and the “dark side of teaching” (Pajak, 1998), as well as the relations occasioned between the intensified subjectivities of themselves and their students. In some senses, we can say that it is *the intensification of the here and now of the “empirical happening”* (op.cit.) that permits a deconstruction of the colonisations of past learning and of the overbearing temptation of universalities.

Situating Radical Reflexivity

Moore (2004) recognizes the potential benefit for student teachers in developing an informed reflection on their actions which enables them

to stand back a little from their own actions, and to address those actions through *informed* reflection rather than merely ‘experiencing’ them. To put it bluntly, in understanding the development of pedagogical practice, one needs to access not only what is ‘immediate’ and ‘visible,’ but also what is not always immediately accessible in the specific classroom situation – what is sometimes called ‘the baggage’ teachers bring into the classroom with them – which offers a broader, typically unacknowledged context both for developing practice and for understanding and facilitating it. (2004, p.20, my emphasis)

This present research implies a loose continuation of Moore *et al’s* line of research (1999, 2001, 2004) in as much as it documents the understanding and transformations that might be leveraged through a reflexivity directly informed by theories, practices and experiences generated by psychology, psychotherapy, the expressive arts and spirituality. In this way the participants’ histories are textualized and con-textualized, and teachers can stand back, not just from their

teaching, but from who they have become and how they have learnt to occupy their social spaces. This overtly psycho-social focus thus goes a step further in an examination of the themes of structure and agency proposed by Coldron and Smith's "partly given and partly achieved" (1999, p.711) teacher identity. In drawing attention to the *psychological* 'structures' that may inform and delimit our agency, the notion of autonomy within the 'achieved,' 'chosen,' and 'created' features of professional identity becomes further squeezed. As 'individuals' we make or interpret the present through the structures of our common and individual humanity. Our autonomy, therefore, is (pre)determined: we are not free to be 'what we are not'. The painful knowledge of our negativity, and the force of the 'unconscious', is, according to Britzman, resisted to our cost. However, if

resistance to knowing is a significant dynamic in public life, there also is the possibility of using analytic insight to move beyond repetitive conflicts, with one provision: we must witness the unconscious. (2003, pp.109-110)

The teachers' narratives generated in this research are fruits of an *informed* witnessing of the unconscious and the possible relationship between past experience and present 'performance'. In this sense, this research witnesses the learning that occurs when the infamous background 'baggage' of teaching becomes the *foreground*.

If we imagine at least two default fields of discourse at work within the teacher's experience of teaching - the personal and the institutional - the SAT programme can be seen as providing a third field of discourse - the human subject - by which to triangulate and understand the teacher's positionings in education, and thereby to plot their professional topographies. The data suggests that by this means teachers are able to decipher with greater accuracy the particularities of the relationship between the personal and institutional discourses at the centre of professional identity and practice. If the early years of teaching are problematic in the sense of the teacher needing to 'dig themselves in' to an identifiable position, Nieves' tale of teachers left behind by education reforms underlines the trap of these defended identities as static positions. This is the problem Foucault pointed to when he says that the human being can be characterized as a creator of forms, forms which can subsequently entrap their creator (Foucault, 2000e). It is, perhaps, this situation of

entrapment that the SAT experience throws most vividly into relief, the question of how the concerns of each teacher, and their strategies to address these concerns, have become problematic rather than life-enhancing.

Seen in this light, one could conclude that the radical reflexivity proposed within the SAT programme should not, *per se*, be lumped with a defeatist, de-politicizing narcissism, as do Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) when they identify and accuse a therapeutic turn in education of encouraging a “rise in beliefs and images of the diminished self”. They argue that therapy’s constitutionally vulnerable self has “erode[d] a robust and confident sense of human possibility”, the latter being replaced “by a deeply pessimistic and instrumental view of education” (p.146). However, in contrast to the accusations of Ecclestone and Hayes, the teachers’ reports of the SAT *as education* are unashamedly positive, as are the repercussions in their teaching life. These teachers do not appear diminished by the admission of fallibility; rather, they appear to be edified and emboldened by the assimilation of their own shadow.

Furthermore, if we agree with the Foucauldian critique of modern government, to discredit the therapeutic turn wholesale is to misunderstand power and its technologies as much as it is to discredit the potential reach of the psycho-spiritual turn. This power, these technologies, do not just oppress us, they make us and are productive of subjectivity (Marshall, 1996). This means that alternative technologies and practices of subjectivity are innately political in the sense that they provide differing narratives for the elaboration of our subjectivity, and thus for the way we are held within a productive power. *The question is not whether such practices are political. The question is whether they result in the adoption of new social practices.* Naranjo sheds light on the importance of (right) action:

While reason can only conjecture, we need to act. And to act, we may need faith and intuition. My own intuition is that nothing is so dangerous to us at present as the attachment to the known. For as we probably felt at the time of our biological birth, in order to be collectively born to our next evolutionary stage we need to plunge into unfamiliar waters.

Let me then end [...] with a quotation from the first literary work in history, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the Sumero-Babylonian story of the Deluge that is echoed in the Book of Genesis. According to the

Babylonian version of the legend, Enil, the God of the Wind, speaks to Utnapishtim, who alone has an ear sufficiently open to hear him in the surrounding noise:

"Men of Shurupak," he said, "Tear down your house and build a ship, abandon your possessions and the works you find beautiful and crave, and save your life instead". (Naranjo, 2010, p.178)

If Cecilia, as a young ideologue, wanted to tear down the edifice of school and build something new in its place, the boat she is now building against the ongoing 'deluge of education' is constructed from a dismantling of the house of her own subjectivity. A "violence of innocence" (Bollas, 1992, p.180) has been replaced by a caution or humility of responsibility. Cecilia now sees her function and purpose as a teacher not as denouncing the gap between actuality and utopia, but as 'bothering'³⁸ (Britzman, 1998, p.32) her own participation in situations of domination (including self-dominations) and struggling to take responsibility for her subjectivity and its multiple relations. This difficult movement toward a specificity in teaching, toward total involvement and implication in one's own activity, whilst most distinctive in Cecilia, is poignantly present in all the narratives. It approximates to a Badiouian 'Event',

which only exists for those who recognize themselves in it: there can be no Event for a non-engaged objective observer. Lacking this engaged position, mere descriptions of the state of things, no matter how accurate, fail to generate emancipatory effects – ultimately, they only render the burden of the lie still more oppressive. (Žižek, 2011, p.xiv)

Whilst some might view the dismantling of teacher identity and probing of education as an excess of reflexivity, an indulgence of narcissism, there are philosophical models that present the necessity of this 'destruction'. Given that the radical reflexivity work of the SAT programme occurs in a collective retreat from the world, Deleuze's reflections on the motif of the desert island can be seen as particularly salient to the present case. According to Deleuze the desert island presents us with a set of contradictions of mythological significance, being defined simultaneously by its fullness and emptiness, by its lands and by its seas. As such, Deleuze conjectures that the desert island presents us with "a prototype of the

³⁸ Britzman states that in "psychoanalytic terms, for the self to be more than a prisoner of its own narcissism, the self must bother itself."

collective soul” (Deleuze, 2004, p.13). This island sets the scene for a re-birth, a renewal, and beginning again:

The island is the necessary minimum for this re-beginning, the material that survives from the first origin, the radiating seed or egg that must be sufficient to re-produce everything. Clearly, this presupposes that the formation of the world happens in two stages, in two periods of time, birth and re-birth [...]. It is not that there is a second birth because there has been a catastrophe, but the reverse, there is a catastrophe after the origin because there must be, from the beginning, a second birth ... The idea of a second origin gives the desert island its whole meaning, the survival of a sacred place in a world that is slow to re-begin. (Deleuze, 2004, p.13-14)

There is something here that calls to mind, once more, Fernando’s metaphor of the umbrella. Fernando, huddled under the umbrella with his students, implies that all that is needed for a second birth for education is contained in that circumscribed world under his metaphorical umbrella:

What happened to me [when I left the SAT] was this; a recuperation of interest in the children. And I think that *everything could begin right there* [...] Motivation does not come from the circus, from the somersaults [...] What is really important in education? [...] From what point do we need to move? (Fernando, my emphasis).

Fernando has subsequently dedicated a whole course to this question, conducted with a group of his students who are college level teachers. They debate priorities in education:

What is the most important thing in education? So the first answers were around curriculum, around professional training, and in the end what was left was the idea of relation, and to that they could not find any ‘buts’. (Fernando)

Ethics and Resistance

Pignatelli’s (1993b) warning against the “totalizing, grand configurations” normally associated with dominant identity discourses is in keeping with Moore’s assertion that an “anti-discursive” reflexivity provides some necessary redress to the competences discourse:

That we do resist, and very forcefully resist, the competences discourse (which is not the same as denying the need to be competent, or suggesting that there is nothing of any merit in identifying, sharing and being assessed according to our competence across a range of areas) is imperative if we are to have any hope of reclaiming teaching – of reclaiming our *profession* – from the politicians and bureaucrats fearful of the potential power of education to challenge and overturn the status quo. Whatever else we may say of it, reflexivity provides one avenue for teachers to take charge of their own learning and development on their own terms, in ways that specifically and systematically include the idiosyncratic, contingent aspects that are so crucial in their work (and in their understanding of their work) but which tend to be largely overlooked in the reductionist discourses of official policy. (Moore, 2004, p.169)

Once we add reflexivity to the mix, teaching slides away from the technical towards the ethical. It ceases to be simply a question of how to correctly apply such and such technique, and becomes a question of how to best occupy a particular space, a particular moment, no longer a only question of *how* to do *x*, but of *what* to do, *who* to be.

Foucault's *telos* for the relationship of the self with the self, gives radical teacher identity work a clear ethico-political relevance within a broad 'church' of critical thinking in relation to subjectivity. Reflexivity, the work of self on self, is rescued from the possibility of self-absorption to the degree that it is embedded within a practice of freedom with political implications. As David Blacker writes about Foucauldian ethics of the care of the self; "This is not self-absorption, but being absorbed into the world: a 'losing-finding' of the self" (1998 p.363). Such political reflexivity ceases to be about teaching and learning *per se*; rather, it attains the status of a politics of ourselves, "a new ethic of self-creation that avoids the pitfalls of both narcissistic aestheticism on the one hand, and the alienation of political obsession on the other" (ibid.). Blacker, in respect of the specific intellectual, talks of "a controlled and self-regulated dissemination of the subject into the world, a positive dissolution" (ibid.). Undoubtedly, as the beating heart of the school as institution, teachers are unable to escape power, but may aspire to become "a channel or 'privileged junction' through which power can be directed" (ibid.). So, whilst not able to achieve a utopian liberation from power for themselves or their students, they can resist and avoid becoming lost to themselves within the confines

of school. That is to say, they can be fully implicated *in* this world (school), at the same time as not being *of* this world. For example, within Blacker's scheme for the specific intellectual professional competency is not the end in itself; rather, it is the means to an end, it is a practice rather than a result, an 'asceticism', a facet of the ethical teacher's honesty and attentiveness, a means of mastering one's causes and effects so as to avoid as much as possible being colonized by the other and/or colonizing the other. Competency for the 'specific', as opposed to 'decadent', teacher would be critically attuned to the deep effect this education might be having on the students. What are the students *really* learning in the classroom, from me, through me, despite me?

Blacker is not alone in highlighting the importance of ethics. There are significant precedents for the ethical turn within teacher identity discourse. Not least, Nell Noddings (2002, 2005) draws our attention to the ethics of care as central and necessary to 'good' teaching and learning. Going further, Elizabeth Campbell (2003) lays out the case for placing ethical competency at the heart of teachers' professional status, as *the* singular skill of teachers. In accordance with Noddings, the ability to make considered and enlightened moral judgements that further individual and collective well-being are presented by Campbell as emblematic of good teaching. However, Campbell's faith in ethical competence is more conservative than it first appears. For example, she is strident in her assessment of teachers' professional obligations:

Professionals are self determining and self regulating. And, while there are many elements in a teacher's world – relating to educational bureaucracies, the establishment of curriculum standards, and other examples of overall governmental policy – for which they cannot be responsible, they surely can be so when it comes to moderating their own behaviour. (p.78)

Things are assumed by Campbell – autonomy, self-determination – which cannot be assumed in the Foucauldian multi-verse. The distinction between the *professional* teacher and the *human* student is all too easily made, and we are left in no doubt that this professional teacher is a saviour figure, an exemplary adult somehow floating free from the confines of intra- and inter-personal conflict. Campbell's ethical teacher finds themselves in a curious position – they must be exemplary carers

within institutional conditions that limits the possibility and relevance of care. It is unclear where the ethical teacher should draw a line under caring for the wellbeing of the student. Would an ethical teacher, sensitive to the damaging effect of ongoing assessment, refuse to implement examinations? Are ethical teachers to rise up against the system and press for the interests of the students against the full weight of official prescription? Indeed, who is to define the interests of the students? Do the teachers' concerns for the interests of the student stop at the primacy of the prescribed curriculum? Or should we conclude that Campbell is advocating teachers adopt an obligation to the welfare of students which goes deep into the heart of education and could be described as critical, or radical?

In contrast, Foucauldian *ethics* does not necessarily lead to what is conventionally termed '*ethical*' or moral behaviour in the sense of becoming 'good' or 'caring'. The care of the self that Foucault was concerned to re-vindicate as a first principle of "ethico-political spirituality" (Connolly, 1993) is not primarily about being good or moral, it is primarily about becoming the master of one's own thoughts and actions, and hence is a project of creative freedom. If freedom, or practices of freedom and self-overcoming, are the holy grail of ethical work on the self, then teachers' care of the *other* could only pass through their own example of freedom: the care of the self is necessary precisely because the subject is born in chains and must free themselves through the cultivation of the self-relation, which includes the examination of those same chains. Taking as his example the ethico-political spirituality of the Hellenic aesthetic of care of the self, Foucault claimed this provided a 'training' that permitted its practitioners "to get prepared" for power, responsibility, beauty, and for death and posterity. Its aesthetics and ascetics were not pursued for the purpose of renunciation:

but [for] the progressive consideration of the self, or mastery over oneself, obtained not through the renunciation of reality but through the acquisition and assimilation of truth. It has as its final aim not the preparation for another reality but access to the reality of this world. The Greek word for this is *paraskeuazo* ("to get prepared"). It is a set of practices by which one can acquire, assimilate, and transform truth into a permanent principle of action. *Aletheia* [truth, that which is evident] becomes *ethos*. It is a process of the intensification of subjectivity". (1997, pp.238-239)

As I hope to have argued, 'meaningful' teacher identity work results from a struggle between an unconscious/pragmatic capitulation to the *status quo* and a bellicose due diligence. As Butler (2005, p.49) argues, "self-reflection and social recognition [are] essential to any substantive account of ethical life". Foucault placed such reflexivity at the heart of a practice of freedom, inciting the subject "to learn to what extent the effort to think one's own history can free thought from what it silently thinks, and so enable it to think differently" (1985, p. 9). The school and teacher identity are, undoubtedly, brimming with both silent thought (assumptions) and silenced thought (prohibitions and marginalizations). Both psychological and Foucauldian critique of subjectivity mean that identity as creatively elaborated can no longer be assumed; rather, what must be assumed as our starting point are degrees of blindness, alienation and/or capitulation. Nor can health, sanity, well-being be assumed; rather, what must be assumed is fallibility and its survival or its wreckage (as seen in teacher turnover, depression, addictions etc). Nor can neutrality be assumed; what must be assumed is politics. And neither can innocence be assumed; rather, what must be assumed is participation. If Foucault vindicates our potential for freedom, maintaining that we are freer than we think. It is, paradoxically, a freedom only made available to us through the awareness of the limits imposed *on* us and *by* us. Our (self-imposed) tutelage is only escapable by retracing and unravelling the mechanisms, practices, beliefs and truths by which we have become chained to our selves and our selves chained to history (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, pp.32-50).

Matthew Clarke's (2009) exploratory paper draws on the ethical work of the later Foucault and, placing the experience of one teacher within this framework, demonstrates the contemporary possibilities of this type of (anti)identity work. He suggests that further research would be necessary in order to explore the validity and viability of this approach to identity. Such work, he claims, is important given the centrality of identity in teaching. This research responds to the necessity identified by Clarke. However, the specific situation in which identity is being explored in this research perhaps provides dimensions to the discussion that are not present in Clarke's paper: notably, the exploration in depth of the dialogue between professional and personal identities of teachers who are *actively* engaged

in contemporary practices of the care of the self. By this means, the research addresses the as-yet neglected realms of 'learning to be' and 'learning to live together' that form two of the four pillars of education as defined by Delors *et al.* (1996) - not through the reductive and prescriptive lens of civic minded education, but through a determined attention toward our experience of life; the intimate joys, aspirations, frustrations, fears, conflicts and meetings that constitute our humanness. Can such a 'learning to be' and 'learning to live together' be viably addressed from the grounds of psychotherapy and spiritual practice? And might such experiences with teachers help to redress the imbalance that has seen the well-being debate almost exclusively focused on students, leaving the teacher ethically bound to care for their students and for education "in a certain way, and at a certain price" (Foucault in Miller, 1994, p.302).

Some Problematizations of the SAT Programme

Up to now, I have not directed any critical attention to the SAT programme itself. In part, this responds to the thesis' objective to document and analyse the transformation of teachers as a positive phenomenon within an identity discourse of becoming (Britzman, 1991; Moore, 2004). However, as the thesis makes inferences about the value of the work of radical reflexivity as professional development for teachers, it seems important to comment on some possible limitations of the SAT programme with regards to the feasibility of its 'insertion' into the prevailing educational context.

Regarding the possible philosophical objections, these might come equally from the 'progressive' or the 'conservative' sides of the political spectrum. From the 'conservatives', we might expect a criticism of the SAT's Dionysian flavour, its open-ended objectives and apparently meandering, undisciplined pedagogic style. From the progressives or radicals, Žižek's critique of Foucault's aesthetic project for the individual would seem pertinent. If Foucault maintained the care of the self is inherently political, Žižek makes it clear that this is a *certain type* of politics, a certain way of engaging in the socio-political field. Žižek draws attention to the fact

that Foucault encourages a break with universal or collective ethics and turns toward an aestheticization in which “each subject must, without any support from universal rules, build his own mode of self-mastery; he must harmonize the antagonism of the powers within himself – invent himself, so to speak, produce himself as a subject, find his own particular art of living” (2008, p.xxiv). For Žižek, this vision of the subject falls unquestionably and unfavourably within the “humanist-elitist tradition” (ibid.) epitomized by the Renaissance ideal of life created as a work of art through the mastery of the passions.

Žižek’s observations on Foucauldian ethics would not seem completely unfounded, nor would its potential relevance as an extrapolated critique of the SAT programme. We may justifiably ask to what degree the SAT programme encourages teachers to withdraw from the messy world of collective thinking and action to concentrate upon a ‘bourgeois’ perfecting of their subjective singularity and their cellular activity as teachers. The evidence here is contradictory. On the one hand it points toward a disengagement from collective politics (e.g. Yvete, Cecilia, and Araceli), and on the other hand it points to an increased awareness of and sensitivity to the otherness of the group, and an increased ability to situate the self within this group (e.g. Carl, Igor, and Nieves).

Furthermore, according to Rose (1996), our cultural fascination with psychology can be seen as symptomatic of the liberal project for the individual and the increasing omnipresence of the discourse of the psy-sciences within all spheres of human endeavour. Rose observes that the twentieth century saw the rise and hegemony of a new type of human species, the ‘psychological being’:

This psychological being is now placed at the origin of all the activities of loving, desiring, speaking, labouring, sickening, and dying: the interiority that has been given to humans by all those projects which would seek to know them and act upon them in order to tell them their truth and make possible their improvement and their happiness. (p.197)

Far from presenting us with a radically alternative discourse or discipline, Rose’s identification of the ‘psychological being’ would imply that the SAT programme’s invitation to self-knowledge is just one more example of the psychological turn that took root in Europe at the beginning of the 20th Century. If we agree with Rose, then we might conclude that the SAT programme, as representative of a

generalized psychological turn (see also Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009), does not embody a radical politics as such, but is itself an expression of a dominant cultural form now thoroughly enmeshed in the individualistic politics of neo-liberal, market democracies. What is more, the SAT's reliance on a prescriptive tool of personality (the enneagram) is potentially problematic from the Foucauldian perspective in as much as the enneagram can be considered as one more technology that creates our subjectivity in the moment it describes the 'truth' about us. This charge against the enneagram of personality is philosophically difficult to combat. Any argument in support of the 'validity' of the enneagram usually rests on its perceived 'usefulness' as a descriptive or analytic tool and its comparability with other such tools.

Whilst these represent powerful arguments against attempts to position the SAT programme as *politically* radical, counter arguments exist. Firstly, it is important to remember that the school is not a neutral ground, but is already traversed with numerous implicit and explicit psycho-spiritual discourses. The question thus becomes one of determining the relative effect of teachers' introduction to the new psycho-spiritual discourse of the SAT programme. For example, we might argue that what is most important is to determine the relative ethico-political benefits of teachers becoming familiar with the psychology of the enneagram as a discourse, as opposed the psychology of deviance and disability that is currently pervasive within the classroom. Secondly, SAT's *bricolage* of psychological, spiritual and artistic practices means the subject is problematized and explored from a diversity of standpoints. As the name 'Seekers After Truth' suggests, the focus of the programme thus shifts from the naming of Truth to the seeking of *truth* through the opening up to experience. This seeking of truth can be likened to an ethos of permanent problematization of the subject through an expanding connection with experience, rather than an ethos of constructing or uncovering the essential self.

Some credence can be given to this interpretation of the SAT programme's *telos* once we take into account the centrality of Buddhist philosophy and practice. Whilst the enneagram of personality seeks to reveal the condition of the ego (and amounts to a model or map of our ethical predicaments), this is simultaneously undermined by the Buddhist proposition of no-self, the insistence on the

fundamental illusion of the existence of an 'I' as an identity that persists across time. The function of 'identity work' is, ultimately, to release the individual from the illusory trap of identification with the ego, thus permitting their commitment to the 'eternal' creative principle and possibility of the emergent. In this sense the SAT programme could be described as embodying the principle that '*the only way out (of identity/ego) is through (identity/ego)*'. We must cultivate our knowledge or problematization of the greatest danger (the moribund stasis of ego) if we are to become free of it.

What is more than clear, both from an examination of the SAT's curriculum and the testimonies of the these teachers who are assimilating its knowledge and experience into their practice, is that the SAT's aims are fundamentally different from what we normally associate with continuing professional development (CPD), even that which could be classified as transformative (see Kennedy's, 2005, discussion on what she terms the transmissive, transitional, and transformative models of CPD). The SAT experience is lived as a radical departure from what these teachers have experienced as CPD (although it is generally more familiar to teachers already involved in some therapeutic milieu). We might say that the SAT takes aim at developing that quality in a person which can be loosely described as 'presence'. Such 'presence' in teaching is the quality or capacity that Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) explore as an "alternative paradigm" for teacher identity and quality. They define presence as an engagement in "authentic relationship with students where know-how to respond with intelligence and compassion to students and their learning" (pp.265-266). The presence that facilitates such engagement is characterized by "a state of alert awareness, receptivity, and connectedness to the mental, emotional and physical workings of both the individual and the group" (ibid.). This attention to the cognitive and affective relations of the classroom is necessary not only as a palliative within the dominant climate of performativity, more importantly it is seen as key to student achievement. Research has demonstrated (Midgley et al., 1989; Pianta, 1999; Roeser et al., 2000; Raith-Roder, 2005 a,b) that "the quality of these relationships is not a frill or 'feel-good' aspect of schooling, it is an essential feature of learning" (Rodgers and Raider-Roth, 2006, p.266). Furthermore, these relationships can only

flourish where teachers are able to employ their full “mental, physical, emotional, and relational resources” (ibid.), i.e. where they are fully present. The authors conclude that reflective (and presumably *reflexive*) teaching “cannot be reduced to a series of behaviours or skills, but is *a practice that demands presence*” (ibid., my emphasis).

But, as mentioned above, the cultivation of presence might not sit well within a context that seeks to cultivate performativity, provoking what might be termed a culture clash. Whilst a debate around potential philosophical or political objections to the SAT's psycho-spiritual pretensions is important (see Žižek's critique of Foucault's aesthetic project above), or at the very least the recognition that objections might exist, what is perhaps more critical in the assessment of the SAT programme as a professional development for teachers is how it sits alongside or within the present culture of schools. In this sense, it would appear that its greatest strength (i.e. its radically different focus and practice) is also its greatest weakness in terms of its generalizability. The following can be said about the compatibility of the SAT with the culture of schools and teacher training:

- The radical reflexivity it proposes is highly challenging, and voluntarily participation is therefore desirable. In the present cultural climate, most teachers do not engage in this type of soul searching voluntarily. Participation is therefore likely to remain a minority activity.
- There is the possibility that teachers who do participate can come to feel more isolated within a school culture that is implicitly and/or explicitly hostile to many of the values, attitudes and practices promoted by the SAT.
- In order for this type of reflexivity to become justifiably obligatory, the common understanding of what teachers are and do would have to change. We would need to evolve from a knowledge-based to an ethics-based concept of good teaching in order to justify subjecting teachers to the rigours of the SAT programme, or its equivalent, *en masse*.
- The pedagogy of problematization at the heart of the SAT programme is perhaps best conceived of as remedial, rather than preventative. The SAT benefits greatly from the negative input of suffering and ‘error’ as ‘fuel’ for

its transformative work around identity. A SAT programme attended exclusively by student teachers in their early twenties is feasible, but would be a different experience from the diversity of participants that comes from a need-based entry into the SAT programme. The richness of the SAT is, in part, derivative of the gravitas afforded by the participants' acquired and cumulative awareness of error, folly and struggle. That is to say, the SAT as it currently stands, is to some degree oppositional, marginal, remedial, rather than preventative.

- Far from bringing an immediate sense of order to life, participants often experience an increasing sense of chaos in the early stages of the SAT process. A principle of growth through disorder and crisis is one that is difficult to sustain within the results focused paradigm that currently dominates education.
- There perhaps exists a temptation to hang too much upon the SAT programme, such that participants are expected, and expect themselves to have achieved permanent change as a result of participation. Generally speaking, it does not take long to realize that the SAT's principle contribution, as Fernando testifies, is a greater awareness of the exquisite multiplicity of our failings, and hence, of the permanence of the struggle to become "worthy of the event" (op.cit.) of life. In this sense, the SAT opens the door to a very long road of psycho-spiritual work, a lifelong learning that, ironically is at odds with our cultural paradigm of education as a preparation for the productivity of adulthood, rather than as a preparation for the closure of death as the Greeks were more inclined to believe.
- The idea of a pedagogy of 'conscience' or 'awareness', connected indirectly to a pedagogy for 'love' (*eros*, *agape*, and *filia*), is central to the SAT curriculum, and represents the motor of a psycho-spiritual development that has as principal purpose a connection to the multiplicity of reality. This can be seen to stand in contrast to a dominant pedagogy for 'productivity' that depends upon selectivity in our awareness of who we are and what is occurring. The spiritual invitation within the SAT program, easily and

erroneously conflated with religion, is fundamentally incompatible to the philosophy and practices of modern schooling which set themselves the task of delimiting the reach of our educational aspirations to the approved fields within the sciences and humanities. Whilst the spiritual aspect of human life may be touched upon via the study of literature and the arts, there is little encouragement to situate this spiritual dimension as present and occurring in the here and now of the classroom. This means that the SAT programme is at odds with the purposes of education as they currently stand.

- If the SAT programme opens up the possibility of an overtly spiritualized pedagogy, this does not mean that the addition of spiritual dimension is sufficient to bring about radical change in the education system. The narrative evidence points to the fact that the SAT has helped teachers to negotiate a more satisfactory way through the system as an act of creative resistance. Whilst this is no small achievement, we might conclude that the reflexivity of the SAT programme could only be truly radicalized were it to stand alongside other problematizations of power-knowledge-subjectivity that directly addressed the politics within an ethico-political spirituality. It would be interesting, for example, to research transformations in teachers who had both participated in the SAT programme and in seminars of critical thinkers such as Foucault. Would the transformational leverage of the SAT be increased or decreased or unaffected by sitting within a more overtly philosophical, political and pedagogic critique of education?

Conclusion

There are grounds from which the reflexivity practised in the SAT programme can be challenged, both in terms of its political radicalism and its compatibility with the education system. However, the current research does provide considerable evidence that the intensely personal psycho-spiritual work within the SAT programme does 'carry-over' and catalyse significant changes in teacher identity and practice. The experience of the SAT as a *tangential* 'training for teaching' is regarded by participants as being decisive. Igor, for example, compares the null effect on his classroom practice of his Masters in Education with the immediate effect of the first SAT retreat. Teachers such as Igor experience the SAT as radically different from other teaching-learning experiences in its capacity to catalyze significant changes in perspectives on teaching's day-to-day practice.

The research problematized and analysed teacher transformations using three conceptual-empirical fields: purposes, orders, and performances. Much has already been said about how teachers' problematizations of their professional experience can be understood in relation to these three fields. In an attempt to comprehend the central feature of the transformations that occurred across the three fields, I have identified, somewhat provisionally, the development of *a new type of authority* as providing the trigger for a great diversity of new practices among participating teachers. This new authority legitimizes transformations in identity and practice on the basis of an increased valuation and awareness of the here and now of the classroom, and of the needs, desires and capacities of all those present. Intra- and inter-personal contact and communication consistently make inroads into the formalities and prescriptions of education, allowing for more creative and responsive points of departure for new identity constructs and their corresponding practices. It is the authority of a new type of knowledge, the valuation of a new type of truth, the cultivation of a new attention in relation to the *immediacy of the event* that provides the foundation for teachers to overturn, or to modify, a *status quo* derived from internal and external expectations.

As a result, in general, teachers' working lives have become more satisfactory: they feel more balanced, more 'in tune' with their possibilities and limitations, more fully present ('warts and all!'), and more inclined to determine parts of the educational agenda according to their own reading of the situation. But what is the wider socio-political or educational significance of these individual 'revolutions'? Britzman is clear that a generalized problem of 'irreality' permeates education, the insistence and imposition of which results in multiple alienations: "Unless the teacher can confront the defences of idealisation and omnipotence in her or his own teaching, there will be no real contact with others" (2009, p.97). Whilst Britzman talks justifiably of *the* teacher, i.e. of the individual manifestation of "idealization and omnipotence", these symptoms or defences are, without doubt, also systemic. As Bion maintains, education and its relations are idealized (1961), and its structures, systems and theories assign an exaggerated power of universality. If teachers are expected to embody this dominant discourse of education, then their re-negotiation of their terms of engagement is not only a personal matter. Whilst these teachers are perhaps isolated in their re-accommodations, this does not mean that their transformations are not politically significant; rather, what is required is to recognize their political significance through the articulation of atomized changes.

The articulation of the atomized work of transformation is one of the aims of this research. This articulation is deemed necessary because, as Bibby points out:

When governments act as if they know what the problems and answers are, they leave teachers and others involved in education powerless to act, unable to engage them in dialogue. The very real difficulties faced by individual teachers and learners in particular classrooms are, under these acts of abandonment, unthinkable. Real people in real schools struggle to act in a context where there is little listening. It would be surprising if the lack of listening did not cascade down; no one is holding the tensions and the anxieties. In rushing to act responsibly, no one takes responsibility; *caring about* has replaced *caring for*. (2011, p.138, emphasis in original)

Listening to the testimonies of these teachers reveals the struggle of a group of teachers against "abandonment", the struggle to assume responsibility and "*care for*" the marginal but persistent voices of Pontelis' *question child* (1981, p.95) and their own *question teacher*. If we place this attention to the self in the context of

Foucault's ethics, then we can see how this might represent a necessary preparation to take one's place in reality and assume, with Foucault, that within the attitude of modernity the

high value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it otherwise than it is, and to transform it not by destroying it but by grasping it in what it is [... thus creating] an exercise in which extreme attention to what is real is confronted by the practice of a liberty that simultaneously respects this reality and violates it. (Foucault and Rabinow, 1991, p.41)

This aesthetic formulation of a 'revolutionary' engagement with reality finds a political echo in Foucault's insistence in the necessity of renouncing the utopian pretensions of universal revolutions in favour of the individually implicated and engaged work within what Foucault (1995) called the "micro-physics of power" (i.e. the local and concrete practices of power that are evident in the technologies created and adopted by institutions such as prisons or schools). Furthermore, the transformations occurring around the SAT programme also acquire a political texture in the light of Badiou's proposal to replace the projects of purification (revolution) with practices of subtraction: "instead of 'winning' (taking power) one maintains a distance towards state power, one creates spaces subtracted from the State" (Žižek, 2011, p.182). Žižek, as mentioned previously, qualifies this idea of "abstract[ing] ourselves from the 'corrupted' order of the State" with the invitation simply to "introduce a supplementary torsion into it [... whereby ...] we make the State function in a non-statal way" (ibid., p.201). This is what would seem to be occurring within the micro-physics of the atomized experiences of these teachers. Whilst the testimonies do not speak of a co-ordinated 'revolt', they are ripe with torsions and imaginings that escape systemic prescriptions.

Take, for example, the case of Law vs. Love - given the emphasis that the SAT programme places on a *pedagogy for love*, and the fact that the possibility of 'love' within education is evoked repeatedly in the narratives of teachers, it is worth bringing to mind Žižek's insistence on the political importance of the dimension of love as radically different to Law (which can be understood as the mode through which the state functions). To introduce the 'discourse' of Love into the mechanics of the State is to act in a non-statal way, it is to attain distance and difference:

Once we become fully aware of the dimension of love in its radical difference from the Law, love has, in a way, already won, since this difference is only visible when one already dwells in love, from the standpoint of love. (Žižek, 2011, pp.153-154)

In the light of Žižek's avowal of a radical dimension of love, apparently innocuous comments, in which teachers often grapple awkwardly with this (almost) unmentionable word, achieve a greater stature. Take, for example the following statement by Nieves:

I have toned down my rigidity. I have toned down my judgements [...] A teacher always wears the cap of judgement. One moment one has to evaluate. Another moment one has to write a report and all that, but ... I have toned that down, and [in its place] I have put ... I would say 'love', although it is a big word. But, yes, there is something like love and of ... It's like, ayyyy, empathy. It's like, ayyy, like *this*, like all of you [SAT collaborators]. That's it! ... (laughter) ... Look, this is what I am learning, at the most basic level, no? (Nieves)

It is precisely here, perhaps, in this shift of dimension described by Nieves, in the love and nurturing required and fomented by the care of the self, and in the awareness of its radical difference from the Law, that the SAT programme and the teachers involved in the research can be seen to be *thinking differently* even whilst they are bound to the limitations of reality. It is a Foucauldian thinking that manifests itself in the spaces forged by the SAT programme. Such thought

is what allows one to step back from this way of acting or reacting, to present it to oneself as an object of thought and question it as to its meaning, its conditions, and its goals. Thought is freedom in relation to what one does, the motion by which one detaches oneself from it, establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem. (Foucault, 1991, p.388)

Despite evidence that psycho-spiritual endeavour can contribute to learning to 'think' in the Foucauldian sense, there exists a generalized caution and trepidation, even among those who sympathize with the psychotherapeutic traditions (e.g. Britzman, Moore, Bibby), to recommend that teachers could benefit from the experience of psychotherapeutic enquiry. The wariness does not seem to stem from the impracticalities and costs of individual therapy (difficulties that are alleviated in group practices such as the SAT); rather, they seem to dwell in the fear of labelling the teacher as 'needing' therapy. Underlying this fear is, possibly, the notion of psychotherapy as curative, and therefore requiring the identification

of 'illness', rather than as a practice and discipline of self-relation. Bibby, for example, says the following:

Access to psychoanalytically informed supervision for teachers could be helpful – it is always helpful to have someone to help us think – but happiness is not something that can be taught, bought or bestowed, and policy directives suggesting that it might be are extremely problematic. (2011, p.136)

Bibby's tentative embrace of the potential that psycho-spiritual practices have to "help us to think", and a possibly erroneous emphasis on "happiness" as opposed to maturation and critical awareness is worrying when coming from what is supposedly the 'supporters' camp. I would contend that it is possible, even necessary, to envisage a re-vitalization of formal education from the grounds of those alternative pedagogies of the psycho-spiritual, a re-vitalization that could take the form, first and foremost, of an *experience and practice* of self-enquiry among teachers. It is my hope and intention that this documentation and analysis of a practice of psycho-spiritually informed radical reflexivity contributes to a collective capacity to detach ourselves from the dominant paradigms of education and teacher identity and to reflect on them as problems and as fields of possibility. On the basis of the evidence of this study, it would seem reasonable to conclude that if we were required to situate the discourse of the SAT programme, then it might be reasonable to look to Janet Alsup's terminology and definition of "borderland discourse" as the best way to capture its point of departure, its ethos. Borderland discourse, says Alsup, is discourse

in which disparate personal and professional subjectivities are put into contact toward a point of integration. Such integration can lead to cognitive, emotional, and corporeal changes, resulting in identity growth or increased metacognitive awareness. (2006, p.205)

Naranjo intimates something similar when he says the following about his perception of what teachers need as an antidote, not only to the immediacy of their own intimate, personal histories, but also to the historic conditions which have determined the climate in which they are required to live and work, and required to foster the lives and the works of the coming generation:

Teachers, more than anyone, need an experimental complement to the present scientific, humanistic, and pedagogical curriculum; a novel

curriculum that would comprise self-knowledge, interpersonal repair, and a spiritual culture based on lived experience (and thus free from dogmatism). (Naranjo, 2010, p.158)

The findings of this research would seem to indicate that Naranjo is not wrong in 'lobbying' for the attractiveness and usefulness of the "experimental complement" and "novel curriculum" that is exemplified in the SAT program. If the resulting cultivation of a "true being" (ibid.), can be critiqued as essentialist, the experience of the teachers in this study reveals that this 'true', dis-identified being, is capable of operating from an expanded and more inclusive sense of themselves (warts and all). Far from simplification toward a stable core of 'essence', this critical self-knowledge seems to permit a greater degree of intra- and inter-connectivity to be established and maintained by these teachers. Whilst the study is far from exhaustive, it marks a stepping-off point, providing, I hope, a sufficiently interesting panorama of potential "identity growth" to stimulate further curiosity in academics, administrators and practitioners alike. Specifically, I hope it will motivate further examination of the implications of such findings within the debates around teacher professional ethics, teacher training, development, and well-being.

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Appendix 1. – The psycho-spiritual concepts and principles of behind the enneagram of personality.

As interpreted by Naranjo, personality crystallizes in infancy and early childhood as a response to anxieties regarding physical survival, pleasure and love (acceptance). The development of personality represents a strategic response to these anxieties, and, as the *enneagram*'s name suggests ('ennea' is Greek for 'nine'), nine basic strategies for the elaboration of their personality are 'available' to the developing child. Each of the nine strategies is denoted by its relation to a particular emotional focus or leaning within the character, known as the "Passion". These passions originate (with two additions) from within the Christian ethical doctrine of 'sin' or 'error', and are: Wrath, Pride, Vanity, Envy, Avarice, Fear, Greed, Lechery and Sloth³⁹. They represent the central organizing principle around which diverse personality traits are formed. In the case of Avarice (number 5), for example, what is of interest is not material avarice (though this, indeed, may be present) as much as an affective and psychic avarice stemming from a defensive or guarded position in the world. The Avaricious character⁴⁰, or strategy, is wary of excessive and potentially dangerous involvement in the world. The Avaricious strategy, one of retreat from the cut and thrust of the social and physical world, precipitates a search for dominion over a reduced territory, or solace in extraordinary love and intimacy, or dependence on certain extraordinary ideas or people (a type of potency by association). Underpinning these movements is the fear of impotence. Rather than confronting the pain of an foreshadowed frustration, the Avaricious character pre-empts the projected frustration through an attitude of chronic or deep resignation, underneath which might lurk the seething rage of the infantile castration of will⁴¹.

Such strategies developed through character were perhaps correct responses to a particular situation in childhood (the Avaricious character might indeed have been impotent in relation to their parents as an infant, and may well have avoided

³⁹ The nine "Passions" are organized and presented in a mandala-like diagram comprising an outer circle around which the 9 emotional points are distributed. These points are connected within the circle by a series of straight lines that form a symmetric pattern. This organization of the passions is not accidental; rather, it reflects and communicates large amounts of information as to the relationship between the different points, and about the points themselves.

⁴⁰ The terms 'personality' and 'character' are interchangeable. 'Personality' has more scientific associations, whilst 'character' is more rooted in our social and narrative history. Whilst Naranjo refers to the "Enneagram of Personality", he more commonly uses 'character' when describing nine different types in recognition of the terms Greek root, *charaxo*, 'to engrave', conjuring up what is for him the necessary sense of permanence and constancy.

⁴¹ Whilst psychodynamic explanations can be linked to personality, it is important to note that in practice personality is principally defined and described by concrete behaviour in the present. So, whilst origins can be ascribed to any character, their most important diagnostic feature is their surface, their discourse, and the immediate manipulations or exclusions that this discourse effects over the subject and the other.

unnecessary suffering through a resigned reduction of demands upon the world). However, character is seen as problematic to the degree that it has become structurally defining of an entire life, imposing its homogenous vision on changed landscapes, commandeering the self and coercing reality. Character, in this sense, favours an internal structure over agency (understood as a spontaneous and flexible response to evolving internal and external circumstances), and requires a selective and manipulated attention to certain features of the internal and external world that has become automatic, mechanical.

Character, then, has become 'self', or rather, 'self' has become character. Central to Naranjo's understanding of the self is the idea of a 'fall from paradise' which he equates to a "degradation of consciousness" and a corresponding corruption of our emotional and motivational capacity and activity. Whilst every individual is conceived with the full potential to live spontaneously from an integrated whole self, or 'I', in which our intellectual, emotional and instinctual faculties are intact, unrestricted and communicated through awareness, our contact with a non-nurturing or actively hostile reality, usually in the form of parents, obliges each child to interrupt their contact with this 'I' and descend to a "lower" world:

Let us say that we have come to be in this lower world that we inhabit after the fall from Eden – the personality that we identify with and implicitly refer to when we say "I" is a way of being that we adopted as a way of defending our life and welfare through an 'adjustment,' in a broad sense of the term, and that usually is a rebellion more than a going along. (1994, p.5)

This new "I", constructed reactively, is the "manipulative" or "counter-manipulative apparatus" that Naranjo denominates as *character*: For it is this character, a "composite of engraved traits", that is the axis around which our 'fallen' life spins and around which we attach a sense of identity:

We may say that the individual is not free anymore to apply or not the results of his [sic] new learning, but has gone "on automatic", putting into operation a certain response set without "consulting" the totality of his mind, or considering the situation creatively in the present. It is this fixity of obsolete responses and the loss of the ability to respond creatively in the present that is most characteristic of psychopathological functioning. (Naranjo, 1994, pp.5-6)

Naranjo identifies two important characteristics of this everyday psychopathology. Firstly, the individual is unaware of the loss or limitation of their full potential: "blind in regard to its own blindness, and limited to the point of believing itself free" (ibid.). Secondly, this is not an unlucky condition of a few blighted 'neurotics', but rather our collective and inescapable reality. Character, or personality, may be more entrenched in certain instances, and some adopted strategies more obviously detrimental or difficult to live with, but the creation of a 'false self' is an existential necessity and part of a collective fiction or illness sustained by our culture.

It is through awakened awareness that we are finally able to perceive our natural 'pathology' as expressed through our personality/ego/character, and from this

insight begin to know and turn toward - or re-know and re-turn to - our free condition. To arrive at this original "I" we must wage "Holy War" against our deficient motivation, the passionate drives and cognitive fixations that contaminate, repress, and stand in place of instinct. We must cultivate awareness, cultivate attention. However, the hoped-for point of arrival, 'essence,' is not to be viewed as some fixed metaphysical point, rather it is the dissolving of fixity by a wash of spontaneity, a continuum of liberated and liberating intra- and inter-personal relations. In this space, response is conditioned neither by internal nor external structures, but flows from a close and critical attention to what is occurring in the here and now, in reality:

The distinction is similar to that proposed today by Winnicott between the 'real self' and the 'false self,' yet it may be misleading to speak of essence, soul, true self or atman as if the reference were something fixed and identifiable. Rather than speak of essence as a thing, then, we should think of it as a process, an ego-less, unobscured, and free manner of functioning of the integrated human wholeness. (ibid., p.10)

To live from our essence can, says Naranjo, be likened to living in the Tao of Eastern mysticism. And the Tao is perhaps best described by describing what it is not. So Naranjo's differentiation between character and essence, 'false self' and 'real self', at the beginning of *Character and Neuroses* serves primarily to set the stage for his subsequent detailed description and analysis of what is *not* essence, i.e. the historically invested and contingent structures of character/personality/ego. There are similarities with Foucault in this sense: Naranjo is concerned to describe the prisons of our self-identification, but not to detail where the path might lead once the door has been opened. Like Foucault, he is concerned to return us to the indeterminate *bios philosophicus*, the unmanipulated flow of life in full consciousness. If the structure of the Enneagram presents us with 'ways out,' practices and attitudes that facilitate a desidentification with character – for example each Passion has its corresponding Virtue (e.g. Pride vs. Humility) and two integrative paths leading to other points on the Enneagram – within the SAT experience a 'cure' or path to 'healing' is perhaps left deliberately vague, and the participant is left staring out on the exploded and unruly ethical landscape of 'who we are' and the myriad permutations of what we might become.

Appendix 2. – A seven page extract from the interview with Reina, conducted in Spain, August 2008 (total transcript length 17 pages)

C: Let's see, from the moment you perceived your character in the introductory course, which was your first encounter, what is it that began to change. I imagine things started to change in the way you lived your work, how? What were the first things to change?

R: Work is where things have been last to change, because I think that there is a very hard nucleus in me, so that other aspects of my life changes before work. For example, I separated, a different style of relations with my friends and the like, and work has been the last.

C: And you feel that is because...?

R: Yes, there's a very tough nucleus.

C: Of what? A nucleus....

R: It is because it has been the motor of my life, Charlie. I was a ugly girl, a clumsy girl, a girl with an apparatus, a girl with glasses. My sister was a girl, a beautiful 3, marvellous, so in my house she's the girl, look how lovely, how delightful...and she's older, very intelligent, very responsible, so that was my life, it was what gave me the right to exist. That is not so easy to get at, it's like there, how do I get at that? It is what has been the most difficult thing for me to enter into. In fact, for me the SATs at first helped me to understand and comprehend my students better. Obviously, it's about the thing of how much I can have a more personal approach, that's to say, when one sees a 5 you say, What's happening to them? Sat all alone in the corner, not talking, without opening their mouths, it doesn't cause any offense. Perhaps at one time I might have felt a degree of scorn, without realizing it. Why aren't they interested? Why don't they get involved? Why don't they participate with the rest of the class? And other strange things like that. So to look at the person with affection has been very useful for me, in the sense of having less prejudices with the students, poor...

C: And what is the result of having less prejudices, let's say, for them? How do you think that they have experienced this? What could they say about you now?

R: That they wouldn't have said before? Well, I think that they feel more comfortable, more accepted, and afterwards they will come to the office and tell you things, and that is rare in the faculty because the relations are usually very distant, there is a very big difference between professor and student, and perhaps they feel a little more... well, it's that there is a truly a care for humanity, and then there is a part of enjoying making use of that knowledge that you have – perhaps you ask a question and they think, “uyyy, how did she know? Why has she touched on that point?” So there is also an element of satisfaction for one's ego – the person tells you, “yes, that's right, that is what is happening”. So...

C: ¿Do you have any examples of this?

R: I have a French student, Tomás, who studied in France and has come here to do his doctorate. He is exceptional, I think, perhaps, a 7. Anyway, he had a problem because he didn't know much Spanish grammar, but he was working in the institute as a reader and was doing some wonderful things with the students –

theatre, exchanges – but the doctoral work was theoretical, and it was demanding and so he didn't know how to focus, what to do. So I said to him, look Tomás, don't worry, we'll think of something between the two of us, something in which you feel comfortable in making progress, and I can feel more comfortable, also, than with the detailed grammatical analysis that was, at the end of the day, the work we were both doing. So that we can think of something elegant. That year he was a reader in French and so what we have tried to do is in the institute, among the subjects, the course on citizenship education was new and people didn't really know what to do with the course, what was going to be taught, many people against this type of thing. So to take advantage of the course, the course contents in French, that way, we can kill two birds with one stone. So, what he has done is work on the contents of the course, using them to teach French. This will be his final work then, and he is happy, me too. Here is an example of taking advantage of the qualities in function of their character so that one can achieve the work.

C: What would you have done before?

R: What would I have done before? Well, most certainly I would have passed him on, definitely I would have said that he went to work with one of my other colleagues, tried to get him off my back, because obviously I would have thought that I'm not up to doing an academic work of that type, and that it had to be of that type and not any other, so that he should go to another colleague. I would have got out of it . . . in fact, that is what I have done!

C: So, in some way you are more, you have become more flexible in your dealings, and in what you feel you can take on?

R: Exactly.

C: So, also there is more flexibility inside you?

R: Effectively. And there is more acceptance of values that before I did not, that I . . .

C: More courage?

R: More courage also. Now I feel that that is also valid, that part of this that is teaching, it is also valid.

C: So you feel that during the first years the principal change was in the way you saw the students?

R: Yes, the students.

C: And with regards to your colleagues, the same?

R: Regarding my colleagues, perhaps in the beginning the same, yes, and perhaps now a little more . . . I am beginning to dare a little more to take things on, to not feel so tiny, tiny, tiny. And this is so wonderful, wonderful, marvellous, stupendous. And it has a lot to do not only with my character type, but also with the personal therapy that I am doing, with my father. I took my father down a peg, I took down a peg all men. All my colleagues are men, all of them, so that from the get go the opinion of a man always appeared to be more valid to me than the opinion of a woman. So, clearly, looking at it from there, it has been a mixture of things, when things began to move at work it is also a result of much personal work in therapy. So now, obviously, explications and reasons, I now know I will be receiving till the day that I die. So now I don't need more explications and reasons, at all, now these are of no use to me, and before if someone had an explication or a reason, it was because they knew the truth.

C: Above and beyond, more important than your own truth?

R: Yes, of course, because on top of it they think much more than me.

C: So, in giving reason to someone else, did you feel a certain rancor, or did you give it for real?

R: Really I believed it, and I gave them the reason. Total surrender. Also, I had the feeling that I took advantage of them, as I felt more stupid and spent the whole day with them, like I took in their reflections, their studies, all their work. No? So, I had the sense that I took advantage of them. I've had that sensation a long time, of being there in a dependency, but dependent because it suited me, because I learnt lots and everything I worked on with them, I also worked with in my classes, I sucked it all in. And, in fact, I used to say, I used to ask myself, "what de they see in me? Why am I a part of this team? What is my place here? What the hell am I doing here? It's great for me, but how am I of use to them? One thing is the friendships, but work is something else, it's also about money and, you know, and this year I have left, at least from part of the team and from many things...

C: Sorry? You have left?

R: I left, I've left.

C: From where?

R: For example, we had a project IMASDE . . .

C: What is that?

R: A project that the state has given to the university. A project of investigation and development. So, in academic terms that is the bees knees, being given a project is not easy, and its like if they do give you a project you should be really proud. They give you a load of money, and, well, they gave us a project, and this year I began to feel that no, that I didn't have anything to offer to it, that I wasn't at ease, that I wasn't really producing anything, that no, and I left. Well, obviously, this is the first time that I don't just go along with what the others say, whatever you say right now. It has been dreadful, they felt betrayed, because I left them in a bind, so I have begun to ask myself as a result of this, if I have always been a nobody, right?, that I was rubbish? Why are they so angry now that I've left the project, if in reality when a person who doesn't offer anything is leaving everyone says ok, great, right? Great, because they didn't do anything. But no, it has been very difficult, they haven't stopped talking to me, but almost.

C: So, how, or from where, did you take the decision not to work in the project?

R: In that project?

C: From where did you decide?

R: From not being able to carry on.

C: Drawing a line?

R: Effectively. The first time in my damn life that I've put a limit. I have a daughter of 8 ...I'd never sat down with my 8 year old daughter to watch a film, with calm. I sat down, but I wasn't calm. I sat down because as a mother I have to spend time with my daughter, etc., but always thinking. But this year I've done it, I have spent time with my daughter, so just thinking about being in another project like that, knowing what it is like, being 5 years in another one of those, I could see that I was going to loose many things. I feel hugely embarrassed, it's amazing all the things that I have learnt, but I simply can't give up on a little room to breathe. They all blamed my personal process, the SAT, my therapy and all that. That I was loosing my head a little, and let's see where this will all end! No?

C: This was last year.

R: Last year.

C: And how did you feel that they responded to you almost with violence, that in some way to you, to the expression of your need, to your prioritizing other aspects of your life?

R: Other aspects of my life? At first I felt totally misunderstood and very hurt because they weren't only my colleagues, they were my friends. But just to think that they were people with whom I'd shared such a lot, that they were in that moment incapable of feeling . . . well, at first I felt really guilty for doing it, guilty until the moment that I started to feel angry on seeing their reactions, so aggressive, no? I said, fuck that, and from feeling guilt I went to feeling angry. First that. And then, in passing, it was also useful to say, to feel appreciative, because they really were angry, and I felt that I really cared about them, so I tried to turn the thing round and say that their huge anger is because they are really upset that I'm leaving. Because, it is true that perhaps looking at it academically, it's not my thing, or their way of doing things is not mine, but I do have a place, even a central place, of union, like a mother.

C: So you are the feeling part within a group, the heart in a group of heads?

R: That's it. So, when that goes you feel a little like "what's happening, what can I hold on to? And a bit of a sense of humour, a lot, and of course I didn't really value that. I felt like I was a type of that, of mummy, of adornment, handing out affection and fun, but that that didn't really have any value in the project, and so when I see what has happened, it's a shame.

C: That you are needed in some way?

R: In some way, yes.

C: So you, as I am understanding it, have had two changes? I'm not sure if there are more up till now. First is that you began to 'see' your students more.

R: My students.

C: In another way? And to deal with them as they are. And the other is that recently you began to place limits?

R: Limits, yes, there. That is very difficult in the faculty, the fact that I am no longer in the project means that my curriculum, those academic things, it implies a big cut, it implies not publishing, that they don't give me access to research. Another thing happened this year – they denied me a field of research, a research field is a good thing. Recently what they have invented is that you, that in your academic life you choose a series of publications, you present them and a commission decides if those publications are valid to warrant giving you a six-year field of investigation. I did it and came up with a pile of papers and such. I could have died, it is the worst thing that could have happened to me, the worst, but I did it two years ago with a great deal of effort and they have refused. And that has been crucial to me, because up to now, Charlie, I had achieved everything through effort, thinking that I wasn't up to it, that I was a fraud, thinking all of that, but I had managed it, I had achieved everything I had set myself. This is the first time that I didn't.

C: And this rejection, have the resources given to you by the SAT or other therapeutic spaces helped you to take on board this 'no'?

R: It's like if I'm not up to it, and that is what happened to me, I think I would not have...imagine it – if it was the purpose of your life, and they say 'no', I would have got angry, it would have put me out of joint, I would have set myself to publish more for the next time, I would have gone off the rails, oh my God!

C: So these processes have given you a little perspective?

R: That's right.

C: To put this element of your life in its place?

R: Actually, I don't think so, yet. But the day will come when I will sit down to celebrate with champagne the day they denied me that research field. Do you know what I mean? I know that that moment will arrive, it hasn't yet, right now I can accept it just, I can say 'ok', that's very good, and it helps to console me. I can see that the path of sacrifice doesn't always lead to glory, no?

C: Yes.

R: Not necessarily. You can kill yourself and maybe you won't achieve anything. So it's not that automatically, because it's a crazy thing about tenacious 4s – if I do this, then I'm going to get a reward, or something like that?

C: And the difficulty of dealing with the frustration? Did you used to have difficulty in dealing with frustration?

R: Totally, totally.

C: Can you give me an example? Do you have an example from the past of you struggling really hard, and then along comes the frustration and . . .

R: No, I can't, I can't even allow it to arrive, I swear. Look, it's so terrible, it's so terrible that I can't admit it. For example, with men, I have thrown myself on top on men so as to avoid the possibility of a 'no', that is, not even ask him, straight in, boom. And obviously the majority of men let themselves be carried away, for sure by something so direct. What happens afterwards is another thing. It is as if I haven't entered, I'm going to tell you this, I still haven't entered into the game because just thinking about coming up against a 'no', I avoid it, up to now I either throw myself on top, or even if I like someone I don't do anything because it might just be a 'no'.

C: 'No' is devastating, or was devastating?

R: No is devastating, totally. I can't. I've felt things in life, inevitably. I had a daughter, but wanted a son also, and I didn't get pregnant. Finally, I got inseminated and I didn't get pregnant, and I was trying and trying and trying. And that was, really, a 'no' from life, that was a 'no' from life that I had to accept, but...

C: Hard?

R: Hard, because it contributed to the separation from my husband.

C: Your tenaciousness there?

R: Yes, my tremendous zeal. He didn't want to keep on it that way, and I did.

C: You would do it differently now?

R: Completely, completely. Now I would let life be, much more, obviously. And with my daughter also. I believe that with my daughter, there is stuff there, right? But if I hadn't entered into therapy and in this process, I think I would have plagued my daughter with demands, like I do to myself. Even now, in spite of everything, I feel very demanding towards her. Before the age of one my daughter had a teacher of English and French who would come to the house to play with her so she would learn.

C: When?

R: One year . . . I'm really crazy, Charlie, during the pregnancy I was delirious.

C: With determination?

R: With the effort! I read all the books that I could during the pregnancy, and so on, and when I was breast feeding I would note down on a piece of paper which breast I used first – and if it was the left on the previous feed, I started on the right. Obviously, the first year of my daughter's life I lived between (aaarrrrghhhh) work and the perfectionism of my task of motherhood.

C: Do you feel then, it appears that before in some way you put all your value, or a big, big part of your value in work, in you academic career, etc. etc . . . where do you find value in your life now?

R: Now, my own process of personal growth, my daughter, and below that everything else. It isn't that work is not in an important place, its not that, but . . .

C: And how do understand that process of growth?

R: The process of growth is bubbling, little by little, taking small steps towards serenity and towards affection. It's true, that's all it is, first of all towards myself, because I have treated myself like a dog. So, it's being able to give a little more care, a little more affection. But, if I give it to myself, I also give it to others. So, my dream is that, to be at peace, and, well, with the love of others. And, also, with my students, to feel more and more at ease with them, to truly help them. Now, something very maternal is appearing with my students that wasn't there before. Also, I think that having a child, even that, I have become more loving, more flexible. You think that the person you have in front of you could be your child. How would you treat them? With regards to my daughter, it comes out a lot, a lot of tenderness has been awoken in me, a tenderness that I didn't have.

C: When you have your students in front of you now, what is it that you would want for them?

R: What I really want, what I would like is that they find their path, and I'm not so interested if they know a lot or less, rather in giving them the tools with which they can look for a path. I'm quite happy about this, because, academically I now know that our career, philology, is really a luxury. But I think that in teaching Spanish they can find an academic future. So I try to train them, give them that, work with them, because this is a really practical way of finding a meaning to what one is doing. I believe, from experience, that if you put yourself in a very theoretical plane, and you have a young person in front of you, in a tutorial, I don't know . . they don't understand, they don't know what the devil it is for. So the best thing is to approach it from the other direction, to say "Imagine that in a class you have to explain when you use the imperfect or when it is the indefinite, when you say 'he was arriving' and when you say 'he arrived', or, I don't know what, you say "How would you explain this to a foreigner?" What kind of explication is that? That is not an explication. So, starting from the need to say, ok, I don't know, but first you have to establish the need that a person might have to search for the information. You can't give information without a person having a need to look for it. So from that point, I try to tell them the truth about what we are doing here, also because if I don't do that then I feel purposeless. Right? That what we are doing here is of use to you, and of use to me. "You'll see, trust me. Wouldn't you like to be able to answer someone who asked you that question. Well, come on, come on, do it!"

C: So , your perception of education has changed, or of the pedagogic process has changed, evolved, moving away a little from the academic question towards, lets say, the resolution of lived problems.

R: Yes, experiential. To get people and say to them, "OK, what do you need to resolve this?" And so, starting from there, I concentrate on those things, because obviously you have to listen to be able to respond. That's it!

C: Is this an unusual stance in the university?

R: Oh yes, totally.

C: Are you the black sheep for the students then?

R: No, because it's true, well, I think that us in my department are a ray of light. In our faculty, and in the branch of humanities, well, I don't know about teaching physics or chemistry, perhaps it is more practical and it needs to be, but in clearly in the area of humanities, literature, history, linguistics, it really is a rare thing. I can see that my advantage is that I have, from the beginning, worked with foreigners, and they have to resolve everything. And I have had to make the class interesting, and I have people in front of me who say to me "teach me how to use it". So you get very good learning. A lot of this way doesn't come from having had to be really in touch with . . . before I knew. I learnt afterwards, first of all I braved the class, and then I learnt afterwards, but really it's very unusual to do it like this. There is an attachment, I see it clearly, there is an attachment to "I'm going to teach what I know", if it is any use to the person in front of me, great, if not, well I'm sorry, but that is what I know and it's what I'm going to teach, and that's that". So, sometimes those are marvellous things, and others you have no idea what to do with them. Truly useful, for me when I was a student, really useful – nothing!! I know this is a little strong, but it was only when I entered into the classroom that I began to learn. And there is not one course in the whole philology degree about teaching methods, just about how to give a class, what to do, to not talk to the blackboard because nobody can hear you, from such a simple thing as this to how to seat people so that they don't finish the course still not knowing the names of their fellow students – it's like, here we are sharing the same shebang, and you don't know the name of the person sitting next to you. That drives me mad, but if you do something even the students get a little shocked, they think it's funny. So, little by little things are changing and younger people are entering, but there is still the shadow of the grand lecture, of the figure...

C: Something very dry?

R: In some cases. I remember with affection some lecturers, even with that style, because of their great knowledge – that is also a little my paranoia – but, yes, let's say that in today's world, without being in favour of running away with utilitarian values, but really one has to think in some way that these people will have to earn a living, the people in front of you, and perhaps I will be reading a wonderful poem by Machado, but *how* do we do it, *why* do we do it?

C: Before you mentioned that in some ways what is most important to you at this point is that these students find their path, that this question of 'seeking' has become of more importance to you, for yourself and for others, than the academic training...

R: Than the academic training?

C: Let's say academic-professional.

R: Yes, that is true. Right now that makes me, it makes me feel a little guilty.

C: You feel a little guilty?

R: Yes, a little guilt.

C: Deep down that is what you feel?

R: Deep down that is what I feel, now it is a physical thing, you say, I need it. One has to make the decision, I feel a little impotent, but I prefer it.

C: How would you put it then? If before you looked for your worth as a person through work, what is it that you look for in work now?

R: What do I look for in my work now? Right, before it gave me a place in the world. What do I look for now?

C: A good question, right?

R: It is a good question. Obviously, I'm only trying, beginning to let out the stuff that I was saying before, trying to make it something more creative, something that surprises me more, to see how I am in all that, to see what I can do, what occurs to me: something much more creative. I hope that it satisfies me, a pleasure, like when you cook a good meal and you feel brilliant. So, that more than the other stuff.

C: So, it's not so much about satisfying some external criteria, rather it's satisfying your interest in living creatively?

R: Correct. Sometimes I say this because they rejected my applications, because I've taken some blows from outside also. But I don't think so. Perhaps partly it is that I was very disappointed, or the frustration of that, that I said, ok, that road is not for me.

C: Sorry, I didn't understand the bit about 'blows'.

R: Yes, that they didn't accept my application for the research field implies a rupture in my academic career. So perhaps, to console myself I say to myself that academic life is not important really, and I get out of it, like escaping. It's like I don't know how much there is of avoiding the frustration and how much there is of genuinely enjoying what I am doing, that is why I don't talk about it with great joy.

C: You mentioned creativity as a factor that you now identify as a source of pleasure for you, that you would like to embed in your work – Are there other things, qualities, or skills or madness that you would like to nurture or live there?

R: Well, there is a part, the dramatic part of the 4, the histrionic part, the theatrical part that is wonderful in a class. I can have my guaranteed public, permanent, it's true, and many times I think that I would like to be an actress or singer and be on stage and things like that. I've suffered and seen the harm I do myself by being *sat* in a classroom. So I enjoy a great deal now that possibility and I get a little crazy, quite crazy. I start to explain I don't know what with a knife placed here, and man, it's a faculty very . . . I was thinking – "Well, they may forget about Chomsky, but they will never forget . . ."

C: The teacher who taught them!

R: With a knife, like the plastic Halloween knives, going through my head. And I began to feel more at ease, so I said "When I explain Chomsky I feel like this, I feel like a knife is going through my head because it's such a construction, my God! So, well, it's also a creative side in my work.

C: So, you are revealing the actress in you that had been repressed?

R: Definitely.

C: Shall we say, in an expressive way?

R: Expressive . . . so instead of hiding this, well, I'm not going to hide it. What's more, I going to exaggerate it, so, great, I have a good time.

C: So that your more histrionic side can be put to good use?

R: Correct.

C: And for positive things?

R: Yes.

C: Before, it's interesting, this subject of 'histrionics' - of hyper-emocionality. How was that in your work before, how did it manifest itself?

R: Yes, true, true. To feel myself with sufficient solidity, the tranquillity to say, ok, in my way – it is not better or worse – whether it results in this thing, or another thing, I'm going to do it my way.

C: What experiences in the SAT can you recall that helped you on this journey? What things have you done here that help you, that have prepared you for this?

R: Obviously, theatre was fundamental for me. I remember that I was so scared that I spent the week sick in the stomach, so much fear, so much fear. So much fear, and yet when I did it, it was so easy. So that when it was over it was a happy thing, very funny, and I stayed with that a little. Catalina, who lead the work with me, said to me that it appeared as if I was beginning to value easiness. I couldn't believe it, because after a week of suffering I was needing total expiation, to stand there as the actress whilst they shouted at me and hit me. But it was so carefree, so superficial, that came out so effortlessly – like, there it is! But I didn't stay like that. I didn't remain in that place, so, well, I'm trying to value ease and so on. In any case, I feel that in spite of all the things that continue to plague me, I feel that in a class of foreigners I'm truly useful. I am.

C: Without effort?

R: Practically without effort, yes I am. And I go to classes with pleasure, with great pleasure. In the faculty, no, so I believe that I continue to feel that it is not the place for me, but . . .

C: Would you be able to renounce the faculty at this moment?

R: No.

C: Can you imagine a moment when you would be able to?

R: Yes, I think I can.

C: What is missing?

R: Well, firstly, the issue of money. It's obvious that it puts the food on the table, and to give my daughter such and such. I don't think it is only an economic thing, I don't know, I don't know. But it must be a big part. There is also a big question about honesty there. In spite of the act that I feel I do as best I can, that they are not paying me and then on top of that I'm tricking everyone, so I try hard, and I think I can be moderately useful, but perhaps my conscience would be clearer if I wasn't doing it.

C: Is it an effort that you continue to enjoy?

R: In the faculty?

C: In the faculty.

R: Perhaps, but I continue to think that perhaps now . . . something in me says that in the faculty they need a certain level, and there I find some consolation by saying "well, you can win a place, but in reality if I knew more I still couldn't adapt. Perhaps a change, changing my subject for example, trying something else . . .

C: Theatre?

R. Something like methodology, more than the theoretical, and leave the theory to other colleagues, find a way to assign it, so that I could take a look at workshops on writing, philology, other teaching that wasn't exactly theoretical linguistics because I feel very distant from linguistic theory at this point. I know that it is what I have learnt up till now, but when I pick up a book on linguistics theory a tremendous laziness fills me.

C: You don't like it?

R: It seems very hard.

C: You don't like it?

R: I don't like it. At this point, I don't like that.

C: Is it hard for you to admit that?

R: It is very difficult for me to say it

Appendix 3. – Consent form (English Translation)

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

Dear Participant

With the aim of attending the ethical questions implicit in research, the following function of this form is to inform the participant about the nature of the research, the way in which the information generated in the interviews/focal groups will be used, and to whom the results will be made available.

Firstly, this research has the provisional title *Humanising education for the 21st century: an evaluation of therapeutic tools in the professional development of school teachers in Mexico and Spain*. It will focus specifically on documenting the tools and the therapeutic experiences of teachers during the SAT programme.

This interview is intended to recall and document your individual experience and to explore how it is that its learning and perspectives have affected your vision and practice as a person and as a teacher. Your reflections and opinions will be Aracelized in the light of information generated from other participants with the aim of establishing common themes and areas of difference, with the hope of establishing the importance and effectiveness of the SAT as a professional training.

The information, in its Aracelized form, will be presented within a doctoral thesis, and subsequently could be published in books or articles so that it forms part of the academic and political debate about the future of education in the 21st century. Also, the transcripts of the interviews could be shared with other academics, for example, the doctoral supervisor.

It is understood that some of the information could be delicate, and for this reason need to ask beforehand for your consent in the use of the information in the form described above. Ideally, I would ask for your consent to quote you using your real name, but the option also exists to be quoted in anonymity, or that the information remain totally confidential (it will not be quoted, nor will your real name be included).

To clarify your level of consent, please tick one of the following options:

Authorize the use of my interview in the terms specified,
and with the use of my name.

☐

Authorize the use of my interview in the terms specified
in anonymity.

☐

I want the interview information to remain completely confidential.

☐

Nombre: _____

Firma: _____

Fecha: _____